

ANTILLEN REVIEW

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**Martina Cabinet
toward more decisive
government**

**Juancho speaks his
mind on independence**

Aruba and the RTC

**Appraisal of economic
developments in 1981**

**RTC's Sword of
Damocles**

**Education not tuned
to society's demands**

Interesting gossip



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FROM THE EDITOR

If there is any truth to the old maxim that knowledge is power then the Antillean people have little power to wield with regard to the country's political future. Only a few weeks away from the Round Table Conference with the Netherlands very few have any idea of what is really involved. Information has been more than scant indeed. Whoever is to blame for this neglect of the basic right to information, certainly not the daily press. Although it was extremely hard to get hold of even the preparatory document (KWG-report) most papers did their utmost trying to inform their readers. In this issue AR joins the effort by presenting views on the independence question by former premier Juancho Evertsz and Aruban businessman Henk Timmer as well as an analysis of the defence question involved. Hopefully these articles will contribute to a better perception of what is by right everybody's concern.

Many in the country praise the Martina Cabinet for restoring stability to the nation's affairs. Many too

feel that the present government is lacking in decisiveness with regard to a score of urgent matters. Reason why AR invited premier Martina and some of his Cabinet members to evaluate their first 14 months in office and to outline plans for the near future. AR is impressed by their frankness even to the point of admitting failures.

Reactions to the first issue of AR have been most helpful with regard to sharpening editorial policy. The magazine's name drew a lot of comment. The combination of the Dutch "Antillen" and the English "Review" left many confused. Apart from the apparent eye-catching value, we do indeed wish the magazine to be a REVIEW of the NETHERLANDS ANTILLES commonly called the "ANTILLEN".

We are most encouraged by the fact that several people took the initiative to send us articles, some of which are published in this issue. This positive reaction strengthens our hope that AR will increasingly serve as a platform of opinion.

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Martina Cabinet toward more decisive government

Reflecting on the 14-month old performance of his Cabinet prime-minister Don Martina (45) speaks in sober but confident tones. None of the politician's usual gloating over successes meant for voters' consumption, but a factual enumeration of accomplishments and shortcomings marks the interview he granted AR.

No doubt this blend of competence, soberness and sincerity explains the widespread popularity Martina enjoys in the country. It also explains the main achievement of his Cabinet: the restoration of confidence in the Antillean government both at home and abroad. A confidence which had all but evaporated, because of mismanagement of the nation's affairs in the past.

As a consequence Martina describes his first period in office as one of restoring order and preparing the ground for more efficient and decisive government.

Difficult start

Prime-minister Martina obviously looks forward to the next stage. Declares he: 'personally I experienced a deepening of insight and a growing feeling of confidence during these 14 months'. With the ease of one who masters his subject he ticks off the main issues his government has been concerned with.

In the area of finance and economy his Cabinet introduced a stern policy of soberness. Expenditures of government services, which had soared to unprecedented heights, were taken in hand. Tight budget control aimed at restoring the balance of payments and increasing foreign exchange reserves was enacted. The results are promising (see: on finance) even though Martina is careful not

to sound too optimistic. 'We have reversed the trend in a positive direction' is all he is prepared to state at this moment. The renewed confidence of Holland, as well as of local and foreign investors in the Antilles' viability, underline his cautiously frased statement.

By far the most serious problem confronting his Cabinet upon taking office concerned the over-manning and inefficiency of the civil services. As a result of political patronizing and a mistaken effort to fight unemployment, the number of civil servants had reached a total out of all proportion. Even more alarming was (and is) the lack of managerial know-how and poor internal communications resulting in inefficient and time-consuming procedures in almost all departments. Premier Martina admits that even his Cabinet is far behind schedule in carrying out its plans because of this deplorable situation. A committee installed to investigate all government services has now completed its work in three ministries. The rest will follow soon. Depending on its findings measures leading to an improvement of management and organisation may be expected.

Courses to upgrade the civil-service already started last year and at least 140 public servants are presently partaking on a voluntary basis.

Relations between the Central Government and the respective Island Governments have improved considerably. No doubt the procedure of organizing Cabinet meetings regularly on the different islands has helped. Martina mentions in particular trouble spot Sint Maarten. Quite some headway has been made with regards to updating government services on the island (see AR vol 1, no. 1). Lack of ca-

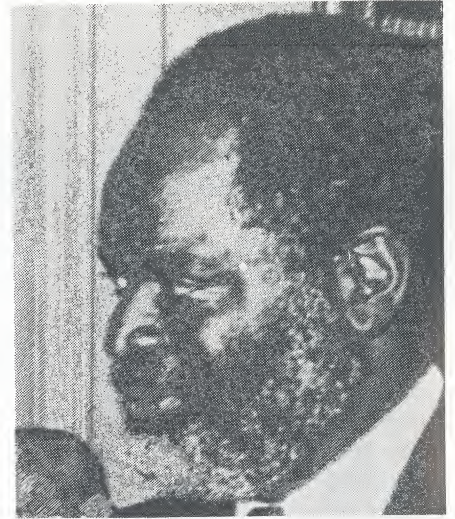


photo by Ken Wong

pable personnel remains a serious drawback, however. A request to make available an expert to head the Department of Finance for three years was turned down by the Dutch. Instead they send someone for only three months. "We are still facing great problems in this area" the prime-minister states.

On the positive side he notes a growing appreciation by the political parties on Sint Maarten for the role the Central Government has to play and which precludes taking sides on local political issues.

Worrisome remains, however, the total lack of cooperation between the Licutenant Governor (appointed by the Central Government) and the island commissioners. Martina seems to have little hope for improvement when he states that a solution has to wait till september, when the present lieutenant Governor's term of service ends.

Promoting new economic activities also ranks high on the priority list of the Cabinet. But again thorough research had first to be done. With assistance of the Irish Export Board and in cooperation

with the Island Governments and representatives of industry the possibilities for exporting locally produced items is being studied. Apparently not without success. Industries both on Aruba and Curaçao, like the Antillean Soap Company, are presently exporting to newly discovered markets in the region.

Proposals to introduce a tax-rebate as an incentive for investors who create new employment in areas designated by the Government may soon become legalised. In this vein the prime-minister continues to give examples of solid research done with regards to the position of working women, social legislation, air policies, the distribution of income and the political fabric of the archipelago. Martina admits freely that the process has been too slow. Much of what should have passed parliament by now has not even reached the legislative body. Once more he sighs over the afore mentioned consuming procedures of the inefficient government apparatus.

Priorities for 1981

Looking ahead mr. Martina lists as priority number one the attention the Cabinet will have to devote to socio-economic affairs. Heavily dependent on developments abroad, the present rate of inflation and rising price of oil will inevitably slow down the growth of the country's income. This in turn will leave little room to maintain an acceptable level of welfare. This gloomy outlook makes it necessary to consider the distribution of income carefully and develop a socially just taxation policy. Also the development of local economic activities will have to be stimulated as much as possible to head off the negative impact of afore mentioned international developments.

An avid reader of the late Nkrumah and Trinidadian Lloyd Best Martina puts great emphasis on the need for development (conscientisation) of the population. Formal and informal education need to be boosted (see: on education) not only for the young but definitely also for adults. Closer cooperation with the social

partners in planning the economy is a must, according to Martina. He is not satisfied with the present state of affairs, nor for that matter is industry, which recently asked for more structured collaboration.

The prime-minister next reflects on the relationship to the Netherlands. He recalls that only two years ago Holland threatened to stop all aid, dissatisfied as The Hague was with the malfunctioning of government in the Antilles. A complete change has taken place since. An impressive number of development projects has been approved for financing (see: development) and on the personal level communications with The Hague are satisfactory. With a view to the upcoming RTC Martina confesses to find the preparatory document (KWG-report) most un-



photo by R.V.D.

ON FINANCE

The minister of Finance Marco de Castro (43) sums up:

'Until 1979 a very negative trend developed. The Antilles were on the brink of a debacle. The balance of payments showed a large deficit. So did the respective national budgets. The foreign exchange reserves were disappearing rapidly.' Carefully choosing his words the energetic minister continues: 'By the end of '79, however, we managed a small surplus on the balance of payments of 6 million. During 1980 this surplus increased to approximately 50 million. The budgets of 1980 no longer show deficits and the flow of money out of the country, which early in 1979 came to 90 million per year, has been stemmed for as much as 50%. A sign that confidence in the future of our country has grown'. Mr. de Castro mentions in this connection the issuing of treasury-bonds, which stimulated investments within the country. He also brings to mind the directives of the Central Bank aimed at limiting the granting of credits for consumption purposes by private banks.

Asked to reveal his plans for the coming six months mr. de Castro announces that the Department of Finance will become more active on the capital market. A Development Bank will be founded, which will hopefully stimulate the establishment of new industries. Blueprints of the institute, in which all islands except Aruba will participate, should be completed before July. Holland and the E.C.C. will provide technical assis-

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readable. He agrees with AR that the RTC's objectives are far from clear and therefore not without possible pitfalls for the Antilles. But says Martina: 'all parties agreed to proceed with the conference which should contribute to a better understanding of each other and foster mutual respect.'. Asked whether the premiership has made him more of an Antillean and less Curaçolene, Martina laughs and admits 'I do have to watch myself not to act too much from the Antillean perspective. After all the political power base of my party is Curaçao'. On the other hand he maintains: 'my role is of necessity a national one and complaints that I should think more of my party I cannot accept'. ■

tence. Antilleans will be involved as counterparts.

Next Mr. de Castro mentions the reactivation of the Pension-Fund.

A thorough reorganisation should soon make possible again the granting of mortgages and eventually of credits to the private sector.

Streamlining construction activities with a view to much desired continuity, is also envisaged. This to prevent lay-offs, when periods of high activity are followed by slow ones. To ensure better coordination between government and the private sector a committee has been installed.

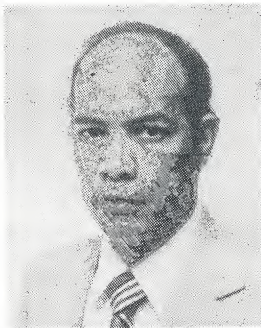
Much attention will be given to tax legislation, which 'should become more socially just', according to de Castro. A committee is presently studying the extent of the tax burden on the various income groups.

Several proposals with regard to tax legislation have been sent to the Advisory Council for comment. One concerns a tax-rebate for employers who create new employment. The minister of Finance will determine in which instances this rebate will be granted. A second proposal aims at alleviating the tax burden for married women who are employed. Another proposed bill would if passed allow companies a larger measure of tax deduction on exploitation costs. Mr. de Castro finally announces the possible

change of the Central Bank's statutes in order to limit the Government's possibilities of procuring credit.

Ruefully Marco de Castro explains that his initial plan to draw up long term budgets has not materialised as yet because also his department suffers a lack of adequate know-how. Progress is being made however, according to the minister, who is obviously not without hopes for the future. ■

photo by R.V.D.



ON EDUCATION

Young and hard driving Jacques Veeris (39) discloses a complete change in education policy. Initially his educational background led him to devote his energies to educational matters per se.

Gradually he became convinced, however, that an education policy has to take into account society's demand for skill. A first round of talks with industry, trade and trade-unions prompted him to aim at a greater flexibility of government resources to meet the demand for skilled labour on all levels of society.

As a result scholarship policy has been changed drastically. The projected long term needs of society now determine the awarding of scholarships. As the Central Government alone spends already close to 10 million on scholarships, a professional investigation of society's needs and what students are worth the investment is imperative, according to Veeris. He accordingly depolitized the committee in charge of the scholarship programme and appointed

representatives from industry, education and the social sector. The committee has also been asked to advise on policy as well as on questions as how to assure the return of students from abroad and facilitate their participation in the production process upon return. Veeris also mentions the recent inclusion of secondary vocational training in the programme. More opportunities should be created, he feels, in particular for women having graduated from domestic science schools, nurse training etc.

Like most Cabinet members Veeris is unhappy about the inefficiency of the civil services. Although he rates most of the personnel in his department first class, he speaks of a frustrating lack of managerial know-how, bad communications and as a result a lagging process of decision making. He eagerly awaits the results of an investigation with a view to reorganisation, which will be held later this year.

Developments on the Windward Islands are mentioned by the minister as most satisfactory. The appointment of windward islander Wycliffe Smith as head of the local education department proved an outstanding success. Veeris soon followed up with appointing two other locals to take charge of inspection and the English language programme.

This departure from the practice of serving the territory all the way from the Leeward Islands has obviously worked well.

Veeris announces the imminent publication of a general policy paper to which educationalists of all the islands contributed. Until now all such papers were written by ex-patriates or organisations from abroad like the UNESCO. The upcoming paper will be a platform of opinions on Antillean education by Antilleans. The procedure of bringing together experts from the different island territories has proved to be extremely fruitful, according to Veeris. This convinced him personally that the Central Government has great potential hitherto unused to serve the cause of better and more functional education. ■

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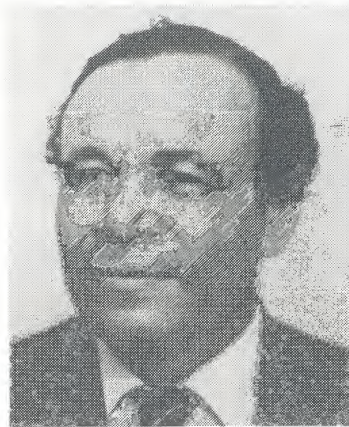
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ON DEVELOPMENT AID

Handling millions of Dutch development aid minister C. H. Statia speaks of a great improvement of relations with The Hague during 1980. Procedures for the financing of projects have been speeded up considerably: the total of approved projects in 1980 amounted to nearly 300 million as compared to 249 million during the preceding three years!

Looking ahead 'Papa' Statia mentions as the most important projects to be realised with Dutch aid in the near future the container-harbours on Aruba and Curaçao (130 mil.); the extension of hotel Bonaire (5 mil.), the building of a hotel school (1 1/2 mil.), the reconstruction of roads (8 mil.) and public transport facilities

on Bonaire (1 mil.) and plans to improve the airport facilities on Saba and St. Eustatius.

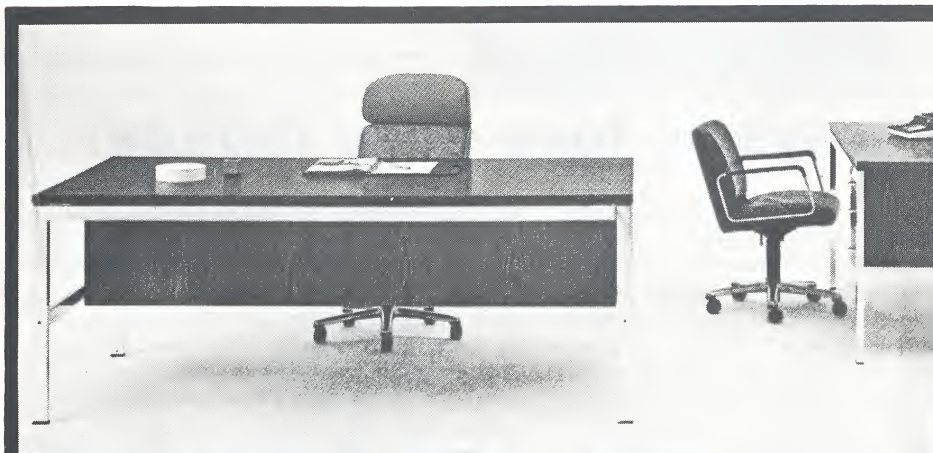


The European Economic Community is to supply 17 million to help Sint Maarten reconstruct its harbour.

In spite of the impressive headway made on procedural questions mr. Statia does not sound altogether happy. He agrees with prime minister Martina that the massive aid from Holland also signifies an increasing dependence of the Antilles on the Netherlands. He is convinced that the Antilles are able to produce more themselves. Conscientisation of the population in particular the youth, is urgently needed, he states.

'If independence is to come — I do not say it should come — we have quite a job of nation building on our hands. To prepare ourselves properly i.e. foster an independent mentality amongst the younger generations, we will need at least 25 to 30 years'. ■

By Roger F. Snow
with Ellie Wempe



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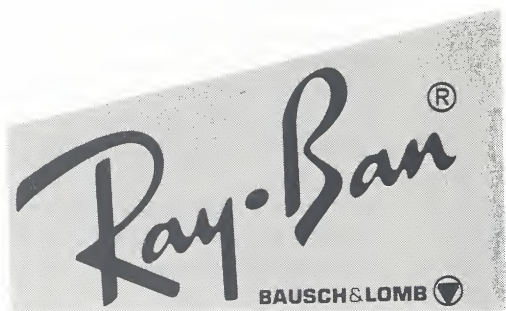
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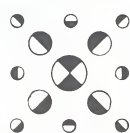


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Juancho speaks his mind on independence

large number of expert advisors, was always ahead of the others and usually got its way for at least 80%! We also learned that once Surinam had announced the date of independence the Dutch willingness to help prepare them for their new status decreased considerably. Many important questions were left to the last moment. I would not like to see happen to the Netherlands Antilles what I experienced when after the Dutch flag had been lowered and the Surinam colours hoisted at midnight on nov. 25th, 1975, I was wakened at four in the morning to settle with the prime-ministers of Holland and Surinam the question of defence, without which the country would not be truly independent upon awakening at six!"

"These experiences led us to force upon Holland a different approach with regard to the future of the Antilles. From now on the pace of developments would be determined by the Antilles and not by Holland. As a result the Kingdom Committee in which Holland had played such a dominant role was dissolved".

Heading for the final solution

In 1977 Juancho's NVPU lost the elections and mr. Boy Rozendaal was charged with the formation of a new government. Bypassing Aruba's largest party MEP added to the already existing tensions between the two larger islands in such a measure that Aruba called on the Crown (Koninkrijks regering) to intervene. Comments Juancho Everts: "In fact the problems were of an internal Antillean nature. We should have solved them ourselves. But I can understand the desire to call in a third party. Such a party, however, should always be neutral and try to reconcile the opposing factions. In my opinion that did not happen. Holland made eagerly use of the opportunity to force upon the Antilles in addition to the creation of a platform to discuss the internal problems (Antilliaans Spoor) the resurrection of the abolished King-

To many he is the cunningest negotiator the Antilles ever produced. Former Dutch premier and political heavyweight Joop den Uyl knew himself several times 'caught out' and admitted so openly. Well-known political commentator Klaas Jan Hindriks (NOS) describes him as a man 'to whom politics come naturally'. And quite a few who watched him handle Antillean-Dutch relations during the mid-seventies are convinced that he would have made a first rate minister of foreign affairs had such a position existed in the Antilles. Reasons why AR invited former prime-minister Juancho Everts (1973-1977) to formulate his views with regard to the upcoming Round Table Conference.

Lessons from the past

"Quite apart from how these islands were joined together in the past and the nature of the present relationship to the Netherlands the question of independence has an importance of its own. We should ask ourselves: is independence indeed a must? It is no secret that I do not think so. What I do believe in is autonomy and self-reliance."

Juancho recalls the famous speech of Queen Wilhelmina from London in 1942 announcing the termination of the colonial era, the Round Table Conference of 1948 leading to the independence of Indonesia and the RTC of 1954 when the Antilles, Holland and Surinam became 'equal partners' in the Kingdom under the so-called Statuut. "The Dutch have always taken a pride in their colonial progressiveness. And no doubt the Statuut was a great step forwards, also in comparison to other colonial powers. But it should never be forgotten that self-interest rather than the interest in the peoples concerned lie at the bottom of this development. In order not to loose the rich East-Indies Holland proposed in 1948 a kind of Union between itself and the colonies, in which all would have an equal standing. The Antilles and Surinam were in fact used to add weight to the



Dutch position at the conference table. And when in spite of this move the East-Indies declared their independence, the RTC continuing with the other two partners immediately became much more rigid. The Dutch need to grant these two colonies equal status had disappeared!

It should also be remembered that at the introduction of the Statuut ('54) Holland did not agree to a right of secession being included in the protocol. And when in 1961 Surinam expressed desire to become independent, the Dutch (and the Antilles) objected in no uncertain terms. Then suddenly The Hague's mood changed. The upcoming socialist party expressed its intention 'to impose' independence on its Kingdom partners by 1975. Surinam concurred, the Antilles did not. Of course we cooperated with regard to Surinam. But the negotiations taught us an important lesson: the Dutch delegation, having the advantage of a

dom Committee now called the KWG. The same Holland, which had agreed to allow the Antilles to prepare for possible independence in stages, the pace of which was to be set by the Antilles themselves, now began to use the KWG to force the 'final solution'."

Juancho turns over the pages of the KWG-report, which will serve as a point of departure for the RTC next month in The Hague. "The Dutchman who took care of the wording is a genius! And he knows the Antilles well. He has crammed the report with grammatical constructions which most cleverly veil the real intentions of the Dutch. Take a concept like: a commonwealth sui generis. A most dangerous idea.

The solution Holland has in mind is in no way comparable to the British idea of commonwealth. The ties will be much looser in fact almost nonexistent. In this day and age the USA is taking care of the interests of the former colonies, the British assist wherever they can even to the extent of maintaining law and order, and also France has never forsaken her former colonies. Holland, however, keeps insisting on an independence the vast majority of our people does not want. An independence which certainly does not serve our socio-economic interests and which we will never be able to defend. To push us off into a region, where from the very south of the mainland right up into the mid-americas law and order is hard to find, must be labelled almost a criminal act.

The report calls the unity of the Netherlands Antilles a fiction. Of course it is a fiction. So is the unity of the United States, Japan, Indonesia and even Holland itself. But all of them are existing fictions and so is the Antilles. The wording of this report, however, has already broken up the Antilles, where it recognises the right to sovereignty of each of the islands! On the other hand it does suggest a 'possible' continuation of Dutch aid in the cultural and educational fields to be formalised by 'one' treaty on condition that the islands will find a way to cooperate closely and act as a unity toward the outside world!"

Transmigration between the islands, a dear subject to Juancho, is 'in principle' favoured by the report be it on condition that work and housing facilities are available for the immigrants. Comments Juancho: "that just about kills it". All you have to do is make sure that there will be no houses available for negroes on Aruba and for indians on "Curaçao!"

"What the report says about the future financial relationship between the islands is giddy nonsense. It speaks of solidarity between the more prosperous and less prosperous islands. But we only have less prosperous and lesser prosperous islands! The

a wrong use of the word 'unanimously'. In this sense it excludes all other alternatives the committee might not have thought of".

In relation to this last remark it should be noticed that none of those who in the past were involved with the Statuut and matters pertaining to independence have been asked to advise the government. It seems a waste of knowhow that neither Ronchi Isa, Steve van der Meer, Percy Henriques, Onchi Henriques, nor Juancho himself have been invited to share their insights.

next step.

What should happen next, according to Juancho Evertsz, is first of all a detente between Aruba and Curaçao. "If Aruba is indeed serious about continuing cooperation with the other islands in the future, and I cannot in all sincerity believe otherwise, then they must realise that the present developments are not to the advantage of any of the Antillean islands. We should return to the earlier agreement of first settling our internal affairs. Only then should we start looking into the possibility of independence."

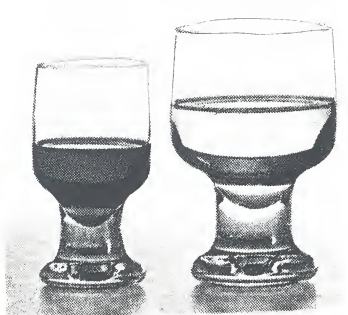
"Of course the Dutch also have a say in all this. But they have used their right of speech in 1634. Now the Antilles should have their turn."

"The KWG should be dissolved and only be brought to life again when the Antilleans have solved their internal problems. And let us not forget that the KWG-report is not the most important report at stake but rather the report of the 'Gemengde Commissie' (a report on Antillean development by Dutch and Antillean experts). In all the different sectors of society on all the six islands Antilleans should start to study that report in order to find out what the possibilities really are for the Antilles".

"And last but not least: don't tell me that this is the time to deal with Holland because negotiations with a possible socialist government might turn out more disadvantageous. One should not draw such a mortgage on the future. In the end we may well find ourselves having lost twice over".

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suggestion is that some of our islands can take care of themselves, which is simply not true! The danger is that such ideas, if not checked in time, begin to live a life of their own. And exactly that is happening at the moment." Page after page Juancho discovers inconsistencies and masterfully veiled traps. The introduction to the report itself is already inconsistent, he observes. "The report, which is supposed to present the respective governments with alternatives, has been approved 'unanimously' by the KWG. But that is

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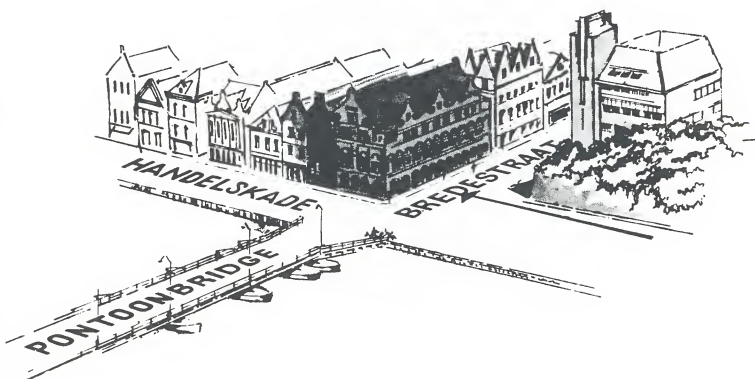
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High hopes for 1981

The past year was not one of the best for Aruba, but neither was it one of the worst. This year, however, promises to be one of the best of all times.

This both sober and hopeful conclusion is to be found in the december issue of ATIA-News, the monthly publication of the Aruba Trade and Industry Association.

1980

Inflation, rising costs of oil and the tight money situation did not allow for any growth in the tourist industry and caused hard times for several sectors of the business world like the supermarket retail trade and car dealers.

Although the hotels managed to achieve the same occupancy rate as in 1979 the rising costs of electricity, water, freight-transport and as a result of goods and wages

— all due to the increase in the price of oil — profits stayed well below of what had been expected. In fact the industry had a rough year. ATIA News' editorial warns that in view of the fierce competition from other destinations, economising is a must. It points by way of example to the national airline ALM, where due to the large number of employees the increased wages created enormous losses, which because of the competition cannot be neutralised by increasing the rates. As a result ALM is faced with the choice: massive layoffs or lower wages for all employees. A situation which the tourist industry may soon have to face, according to ATIA News.

The supermarket retail trade was also hit hard by the continuous rise in costs, so notes Robert Chemaly, president of Aruba's Trade and Industry Association.

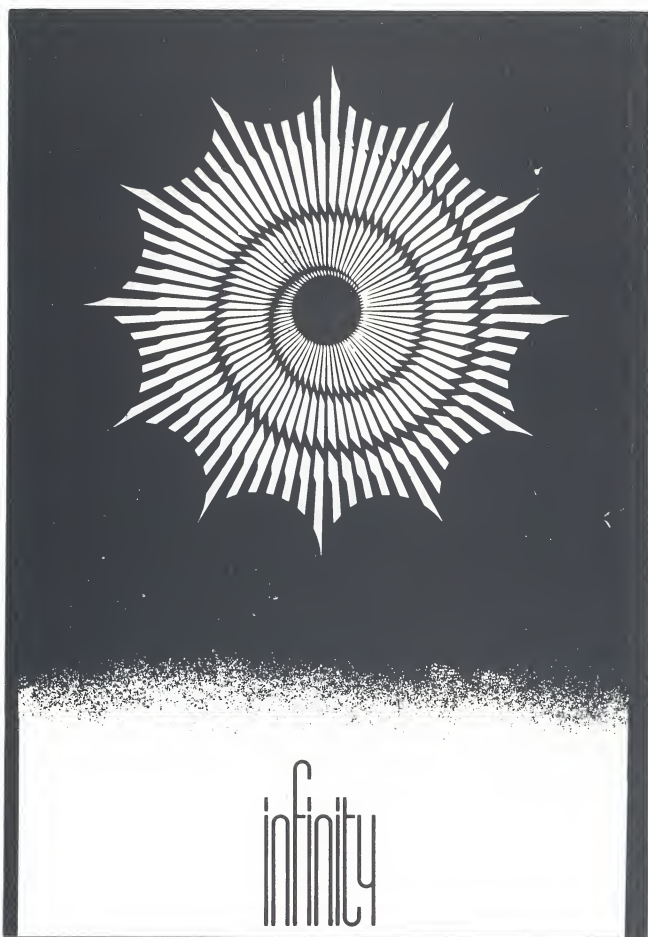
The Central Government's restriction on credits and its tight control on prices made it extremely difficult to maintain a viable operation.

The most serious problem the Aruban business community faced in 1980, however, was the cooling of relations with the Island Government.

Constructive criticism voiced in independent and freedom of the press loving ATIA News was not taken well by the authorities. Confusing their role of responsible government authorities with their functioning as representatives of a political party, they took the criticism to be directed against the ruling party MEP. This mistaken attitude created, in the opinion of many, a real threat to the freedom of expression. ATIA News' editorial, without covering up the issue, extends a hand to the government to reestablish productive cooperation. It declares to be 'sure that this (problem) is a temporary thing and that it will be possible



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to restore confidence between these vital sectors in our community'.

1981

Prospects for 1981 look very promising indeed, according to mr. Mirto A. Roos, president of Aruba's Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

New markets for the tourist industry have been tapped during the past year and new airlines have included Aruba in their schedules. Avianca has recently started to fly in from Colombia, Ever Green Airlines from Philadelphia (USA) and American Airlines from Miami (USA). ALM opened a route to and from Cali (Colombia). Air Boliviano is expected to open up a line bringing in tourists from Argentina soon.

A development which at the present moment causes an acute shortage of hotelrooms.

In accordance the Aruba Concorde Hotel plans to construct another 580 rooms. The Hyatt chain is considering the building of a new hotel and the Playa

Linda project – a time sharing hotel setup – is at an advanced stage, construction expected to start any day from now.

To make the island even more attractive a recreation park, Aruba Sealife, is planned and should be realised before the end of the year.

Obviously these developments will boost the Aruban economy considerably. Together with the construction of a Public Library, a hotel-school and Customs building they will also improve the employment situation. With regards to this last point the Chamber of Commerce points out, however, that the lack of skilled labour on the island (see education) will force companies to import foreign skilled labourers, which in turn will cause a 'not neglectable flight of foreign exchange sources'. The Chamber suggests a spreading of building activities in the future.

This year will also see the much needed beautification of San Nicolas and the construction of a container harbour in Oranjestad. Moreover Exxon, which operates a

large refinery on the island, has sizeable investment plans in mind. 'Though nothing has been divulged officially yet', mr. Roos writes, 'it is intended that an amount of approximately US\$ 425 million will be invested starting in 1981. The offshore business too is growing rapidly into an important pillar of Aruba's economy. The recent establishment of the Canadian International Bank is expected to induce other banks to follow suit.

And finally 1981 will be politically speaking a most important year for Aruba. Within weeks from now the first Round Table Conference between the Antilles and the Netherlands is supposed to start in The Hague, Holland. Delegates from Aruba will no doubt press for an early decision on Aruba's future position. It stands to reason that a wisely balanced and planned transition period to greater independence and new relations with Holland and the other islands, is a primary condition for an economically viable future. ■

Aruba and the RTC

by H. Timmer.

While other islands have voiced objections against holding a RTC as early as February 1981, Aruba has always insisted on a conference at Kingdom level as early as possible. Now that the agenda has been defined, most opposition against the dates suggested by the Netherlands is gone. One of the reasons for not holding the conference early in 1981 was said to be the lack of time for preparation and the need to have a referendum or opinion research held among the population of the various islands. It is a known fact that a large majority on each of the six islands does not want independence, at least not in the near future. Most people feel very comfortable with Dutch defence, security guaranteed by the Dutch and Dutch handling of foreign relations. They would also rather continue to receive development loans from Holland than to have to apply to others like Venezuela.

In the minds of most independence will be the natural result of the process now set in motion. But they consider it something to be pursued at their own pace without disturbing the slow economic development process. The Antilleans tend to get irritated by the impatience shown by some Dutch politicians who would like to see the future of these islands determined in a few years. The people of these islands will definitely not allow themselves to be hurried into independence just to please Dutch political parties, seeking compliments from other nations on their exemplary behaviour in getting rid of their colonies. Some of these Dutch politicians give the impression that they do not care about the future of these islands and their popula-

tions, as long as they can get applause in the United Nations. The independence movement of the Arubans has been welcomed by those politicians as an excuse to push all six islands into a premature and hasty independence. Everybody has seen what this hastiness has led to in Surinam. It has also become quite evident in the meantime that what Aruba really wants is not independence from the Netherlands, at least not for the time being, but an independent status in a restructured system of cooperation between the six islands. That simply means replacing the present central government by a new entity to coordinate those matters it will be entrusted with by the islands and to set the rules under which the independent islands can co-exist in friendly competition and cooperation.

Aruba will be most happy if this new institutionalised cooperation between the islands can be realised without breaking the ties with Holland. At least Aruba is willing to give it a try. Much will depend on the other islands. They must be prepared to dismantle the present system of central government and have this replaced by a lowkey entity of cooperation, which would allow each of the islands to set its own specific course, at the same time preserving the advantages of coordination and cooperation. It must be realised that the islands can not survive as separate small countries. Such reduction in scale would not be feasible financially. It would mean a big step backwards economically, steep increases in taxes and a lower standard of living, which would in turn cause many to emigrate. Therefore all moneysaving cooperation and

coordination must be continued as much as possible.

To decide about this future cooperation will be the main task of the first RTC. Naturally the right of each island to determine for itself what course it will take when the time of political independence has come will be an important issue. There is consensus about this freedom of choice, but the RTC is needed to get this consensus down in black and white in order to guarantee this future right and give it international recognition. Aruba will of course insist that the other islands and the Netherlands confirm the right of Aruba to become an independent country, if after a number of years it is not satisfied with the new system of cooperation between the islands.

The agenda of the RTC does not mention a transition period nor the length of such a period. This gives welcome relief to those who were afraid that the Netherlands would insist on setting a date for political independence. It would have been almost impossible to reach an agreement on such a difficult matter. Even in Aruba most people prefer to leave the date open for the time being. Everybody agrees that it is much wiser to restructure the government system first, then try out the new system and after seeing how it functions start discussing political independence and the timing thereof. By omitting this subject on the agenda of this first RTC the need for a referendum at this time has also vanished. It has given this conference a much better chance to become the successful start of a completely new era in the history of these islands. ■

Diving school initiates horticultural project

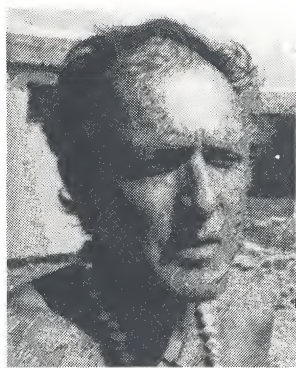


photo by Roger Snow

Don Stewart.

The coral reefs fringing the coast of Bonaire are counted amongst the most beautiful of the Caribbean. During the past few years more than 20,000 lovers of the diving sport travelled long distances to enjoy their exquisite splendour. Many of them pay repeat-visits not in the least to renew friendship with Hemmingwayesque Don Stewart, driving force behind Bonaire's diving industry. Having learned the art of diving from him they often pay back by giving expert advice on the many projects resourceful Stewart is involved in. Says Don: 'the friendship which we built up with these thousands of people is now paying off for Bonaire'. This certainly applies to his latest initiative setting up a nursery for plants, trees and vegetables aimed at supplying the dry island's needs. Suggestions are coming in from abroad concerning horticultural and technical aspects of the project, which will utilize Bonaire's natural resources as much as possible.

Deeply attached to the island on which he set foot some 15 years ago Don became convinced hearing some of his guests speak that much can be done to improve the island's vegetation. Modern methods like hydroponics, the culti-

vation of plants in liquid nutrient solutions, seem to hold a promise for a viable operation. Together with partners Peter Kamp and Winfred Dania Don began to experiment on the grounds of his Diving School, Habitat. Not relying on outside funds the 'Captain's Garden Company' started small. Now it has a stock of 1600 plants and trees, and grows tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers with so much success that the operation will soon move to a proper plantation, called Guatemala. The company furthermore advises on plant-diseases, rampant in Bonaire because of a lack of know-how, and is ready to undertake landscaping for hotels, companies, government etc. The main idea of the project is to utilize Bonaire's own resources. Diving friends selected 5 tomato species (out of the existing 135) which agree with conditions on the island. Others supplied from their background

the necessary information needed for drawing energy from wind-power. And again others suggested the use of an Aerobic tank to produce fertilizer from human faeces for the plant and tree section.

The earlier mentioned hydroponic system saves at least 75% on the use of water, an expensive commodity on the dry island. Showing AR around Don Stewart commented: 'I am not an expert. All the work is done by Peter and Winfred. Peter is a find. He did the landscaping for Hotel Concorde in Aruba. Moreover he is an economist and therefore in charge of management. Winfred loves plants. He is a deaf-mute. We noticed by the way how much his lipreading and speech improved working within our small team. You see, this is what the project means to me: the satisfaction of seeing something useful being accomplished in more than one sense'.

Like his Diving School, which has become of great value to the island, not in the least because it contributes over 7 million a year to the economy, this project is rapidly growing in importance. ■



photo by Roger Snow

Preparing diving trip.



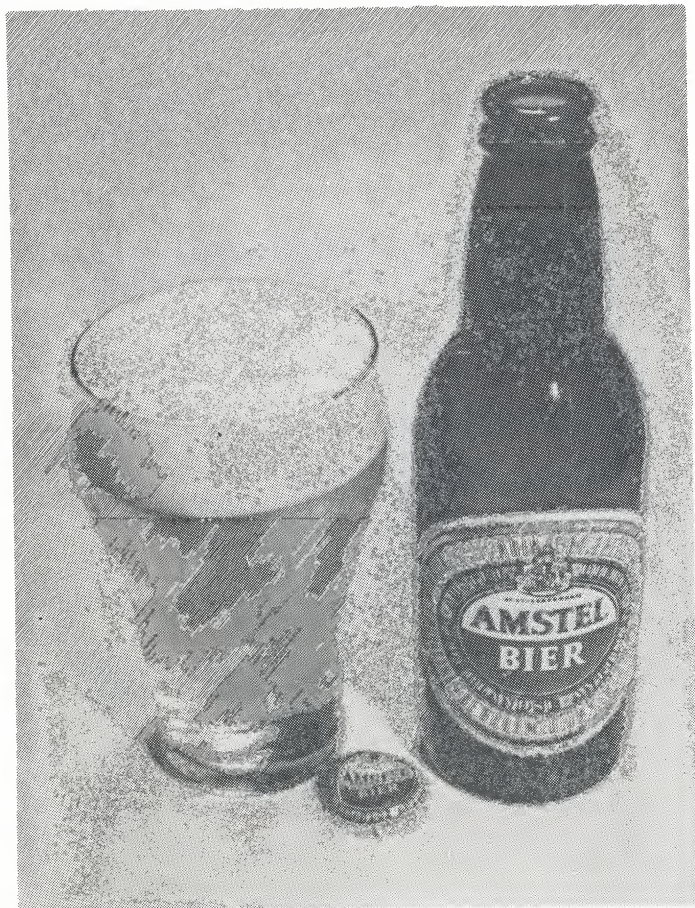
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Curacao's economic policy

Readying harbour for 21st century

Ranking among the world's busiest ports Curaçao's harbour is presently being overhauled with a view to the latest requirements in cargo and passenger handling. The sweeping reorganisation of its structure, services and facilities as well as the construction of a new container terminal are aimed at gearing this vital source of the island's income for the next century. In proportion to its size and economy a gigantic undertaking, which will cost no less than 85 million guilders or close to 50 million US-dollars. With Dutch financial aid and expert advice from the world's best organised harbour of Rotterdam, this visionary project of Curaçao's government has every chance of becoming an outstanding success.

Harbours anywhere play a most important role in the socio-economic development of a country. Reason why governments are eager to be involved in the planning of port activities. This applies in particular to an island like Curaçao, which depends not only heavily on foreign supplies for its own needs, but also on the use by third parties of its unique transit possibilities.

For many centuries its geographical position presented the island with lucrative opportunities channeling trade from beyond the ocean to the mainland and surrounding region. In modern days its exceptionally deep bays added in no small measure to this function. They formed a decisive factor for the establishment of one of the world's largest refineries (Shell) earlier this century and more recently of a huge oil-terminal. Cruise-lines too find the island attractive not in the least because of mooring-possibilities right in the heart of the city built around the Santa Anna Bay.

Efficient use of these natural facilities enabled Curaçao to compete successfully with other harbours. Right up to this day it offers high quality services against acceptable prices. Handling 400.000 tons of cargo yearly, besides crude oil and oil-products, it ranks high on

the world's scale in terms of tonnage. A position it is eager to maintain. To do so a drastic re-arrangement of the port both organisationally and physically, however, is unavoidable. A fact recognized by the Curaçao Government several years ago. Learning of the rapid development in container transport and aware of the significance of cruise tourism for the island's economy, it requested Holland to make available a group of experts to advice on a long term policy. The Hague reacted favourably and in 1977 a team led by mr. H. Molenaar, director of Rotterdam's Municipal Port Enterprises, was installed. An extensive report was published that same year recommending the relocation of several activities from one part of the harbour (Anna Bay) to another (Schottegat), the acquirement of the quays along the Anna Bay and the construction of a container terminal.

An extremely costly project, which obviously could only be undertaken with extensive aid from Holland. The Hague agreed in principle on condition that port management and operation should first be reorganised. Preparations to comply with these conditions as well as the necessary groundwork for the many aspects of the project have now been completed.

'Management and Operation'

In order to guarantee an efficient organisation in the future the formation of two limited liability companies was advised. One, the Curaçao Port Authority (CPA), to take charge of overall port management and the other, Curaçao Port Services (CPS), to handle stevedore and transport activities.

The CPA, the articles of incorporation of which have been submitted to the Island Government earlier this month, will have as its main functions strategy planning, development, operation and administration. An economic department will take care of market analysis and exploitation. The technical department is expected to do the necessary research and draw up masterplans with regards to the infrastructure. Likewise there will be departments for the financial, nautical and juridical aspects of the total operation.

A project coordinator has in the meantime been appointed. The job went to mr. Willem Kroft, who is well acquainted with the Netherlands Antilles. Mr. Kroft, who held a leading position in the OGEN concern, will work in close contact with his Antillean counterpart who has yet to be appointed.

The Curaçao Port Services NV, a merger of three stevedore companies, is already in existence. The only other remaining stevedore company, Gomez Enterprises, is expected to join in the near future. Whether the transport organisations will join the CPS still remains to be seen. Their operations being quite profitable the owners are naturally afraid to join the stevedores who up till last year ran a deficit. Negotiations are expected to be difficult and time-consuming.

The Aruba solution of two separate companies for stevedore and transport activities will certainly be of influence. In particular because one of the transport companies (de Veer) operates on both islands.

In spite of this remaining problem so much progress has been made in guaranteeing proper management and operation, that the advisory committee of mr. Moleenaar recommended last July to proceed with the actual execution of the project.

'Santa Anna Bay'

Another important factor contributing to the above mentioned recommendation was the agreement reached between the owners of harbour facilities along the Santa Anna Bay and the government. The first consented to sell for 11 million guilders, thereby making control of all port facilities by the CPA possible. Concentration of all cargo handling in the Schottegat can now be realised.

The financial arrangements concerning the purchase of the Anna Bay properties are worth mentioning. In particular because 11 million seems a very large sum for the far from rich Island Government of Curaçao. The Netherlands agreed to provide the money, 50% as a gift and the other half on soft loan terms against 2.5%. Profit-taxes payable by the previous owners of the Anna Bay properties on the 11 million, however, will amount to almost 5 million! Meaning that in the end the Curaçao Government itself will have paid little to nothing for the acquisition of this important stretch of quays with a total length of 1.833 metres.

The purchase of the Anna Bay property (area: 62.117 square metres) also allows for seriously considering the building of a passenger terminal for visiting cruise-ships right on the threshold of the old city. Such a move might even attract Shipping Companies to start using Curaçao as a base-port for cruises. (see also Tourism)

A feasibility study to that effect will be completed by July '81. Indications are that the European Economic Community is favourably inclined to help finance the reconstruction of the Anna Bay facilities.

'Container Terminal'

Preparations for the construction of a container terminal on the Schottegat-Eastside have in the meantime proceeded. The need for such a terminal is quite evident. Almost 25.000 containers pass through the harbour yearly. Indications are that this number might run up considerably once proper facilities are available.

Training of staff members and key personnel will be taken care of by the Europe Container Terminus in Rotterdam, which will also act in a general advisory capacity. The actual construction of the terminal can be done by local know-how, according to the advisers.

To ensure high quality service Island Commissioner Agustin Diaz hopes to submit before long plans for a Port technical School to the Island Council.

'Impressive'

Reviewing all the preparatory work, which includes at least 9 detailed documents on the or-

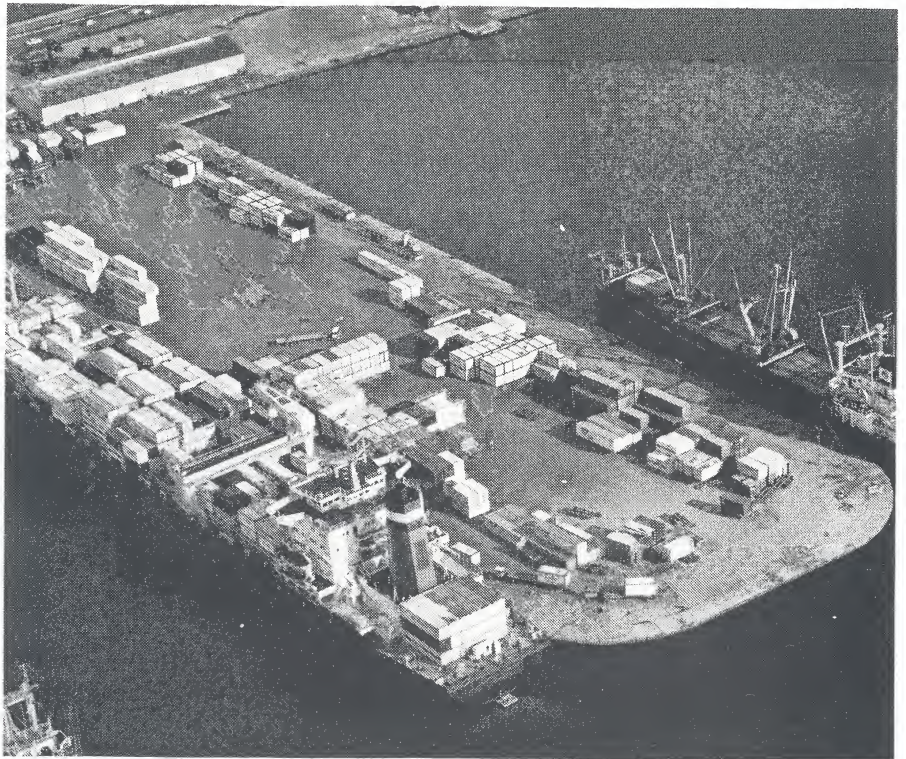


photo by Hart's Camera

Plans have been developed to build a 480 metres long pier and prepare an area of approximately 20 acres for transshipment storage. This set-up will be able to handle two second generation container ships (length 240 m., draught 11m.) and have a maximum capacity of 45.000 containers.

Builders' specifications were submitted earlier this month leading to the expectation that the project will be completed by the end of 1983. A project manager will be appointed within two months.

ganisational and technical aspects of the project, one cannot be but impressed. The farsightedness of Curaçao's authorities coupled with Holland's willingness to aid financially and the highly expert assistance of Rotterdam's port authorities have laid the foundation for a sound harbour operation for decades to come. The first of the three projected stages having been completed successfully there seems little doubt that the Curaçao harbour will rank among the most modern organised and equipped ports by the mid-eighties. ■

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Building a sound economy

A view from Sint Maarten

Louis N. Peters, the dynamic and bright Executive Director of Dutch Windwards Islands' Chamber of Commerce and Industry, recently expressed in a letter to AR his personal views on the urgent need for a long range economic strategy to be developed both on the insular and national level.

Noting that all over the Caribbean governments are trying to establish a strategy to fight off inflation and to rebuild their one-island economies, mr. Peters fears that the present political bickering between the six islands may jeopardise such attempts in the Netherlands Antilles.

During the last visit of the Martina cabinet to Sint Maarten he observed an overemphasis on political questions. All economic matters were subjected to politicking, he maintains. Undue prevalence was given to the question how to transfer unemployed workers from Curacao to Sint Maarten. But using Sint Maarten as a dumping ground for inert unemployed will not solve Curacao's problem nor help Sint Maarten.

Mr. Peters suspects a lack of consensus within the cabinet on economic strategy. Although he understands that the Martina government has to be responsive to the needs of the poor, unemployed and alienated workers who gave it the overwhelming mandate to run the nation's affairs, he contends it to be politically imprudent to continuously project those needs without simultaneously trying to encourage the private sector to

supply the jobs to meet these needs.

In his opinion only a sound economy with higher levels of productivity and private employment can solve the social problems the



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islands are presently facing. To promote such an economy a greater share of the real gross national product will have to be devoted to saving, investment and training. Peters writes 'we need to equip our human resources with suitable modern skills, develop modern and efficient work habits, improve our competitive ability for both domestic and foreign investors, stimulate greater price competitiveness, and promote more agricultural productivity'.

To achieve these objectives, which were established at the beginning of the Martina government, a national policy for private investment that will permit more rapid capital recovery, encourage investment and foster skill training, is urgently needed, according to Peters. He writes:

'A central part of this policy for private investment should be the reduction of disincentives to investment. Since the early 70-ties a low rate of private capital formation has been a major contributor to this country's dismal employment situation. A significant increase in capital formation is necessary both to support healthy rates of productivity gains and real economic growth as well as to meet the growing capital needs arising from such factors as increased energy costs, more foreign imports, and growing unemployment'.

Peters furthermore contends that 'a repeal of the present dismissal law would restore the needed confidence which in turn would encourage more development of job opportunities'.

In conclusion he expresses the wish that the Martina cabinet 'will spend more time on building an economically stronger country than on the existing political differences. For in the future all will depend 'on a highly productive, competitive and low inflation economy'. ■



Appraisal of economic developments in 1980

by H. C. Beers

The most important yardstick of economic development, the balance of payments, recorded in 1980 a substantial surplus. The resulting rise in the foreign exchange reserves, however, was not completely earned but in part granted by the Netherlands. Not only did the amounts received within the framework of development assistance increase considerably, but also a special aid was received by way of a reduction on the payments of interest and redemption on the official public debt. It is still too early to analyse in detail the entire impact of the financial support by the Netherlands on the balance of payments result. These transfers seem to exceed the net result of external trade, services and income transactions.

The amount spent for the import of merchandise for sale on the local market to residents and tourists rose quite substantially, mainly because of rising prices abroad. Since all goods intended for local consumption and production have to be imported, foreign inflation strongly influences the domestic price level. The islands of the Netherlands Antilles depend entirely on other countries for their formation of income; there are hardly any raw materials in sufficient quantities and in general the agricultural sector also produces very little.

Domestic production and consequently the level of prosperity depend on the demand abroad. The main sectors are oil refining, transportation, tourism and the so-called offshore business.

The oil industry comprises two large refineries, Shell on Curaçao

and Lago (Exxon) on Aruba.

During the years following the first oil crisis in 1973-74 the refineries showed poor results. However, the relative scarcity of oil in 1979, owing to the events in Iran, resulted in a huge margin between the price of crude and the price of processed products. In 1980 the terms of the delivery contracts with Venezuela were revised resulting in less favourable margins.

The refineries recorded reasonable profits, but despite their performance they seem to be rather pessimistic about being able to maintain present output in the long term.

Transportation includes storage and transshipment facilities (in particular for oil), ship repairs, shipchandling and bunkering. The oil storage companies on Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao performed well during 1980. Curaçao Oil Terminal N.V. initiated contacts with Mexico to broaden its range of customers. The Curaçao Drydock handles ships up to 120.000 dwt. and employs about 1.200 highly skilled workers. In contrast with 1979 the company operated throughout 1980 at an equal utilization rate. The expectations for the near future are good and the company intends to expand by constructing an elevator for smaller ships. The national airline A.L.M. continued to operate at a loss, mainly due to rising energy prices and increasing competition.

The growth, if any, of the tourist sector, was very moderate in 1980. Both Aruba and Curaçao recorded about the same number of stay

over tourists compared to 1979. However, the average stay decreased in Aruba and increased in Curaçao. Cruise tourism suffered a setback in particular on Aruba. Hardly any data are available to get an impression of the development on St. Maarten. The number of cruise calls probably grew during 1980 and maybe also the number of stay over tourists. The boom in the tourist industry on St. Maarten has developed so fast that it is now rather out of control. This island with about 14.000 inhabitants on the Dutch Antilles part played host to more than 300.000 visitors, mainly Americans.

Although the offshore sector directly creates only about 1.000 jobs, it is a lucrative source of foreign exchange and income for the Netherlands Antilles. In 1979 these companies paid f. 62 million in profit taxes. In 1980 this amount soared to about f. 100 million. The attraction of the Netherlands Antilles for offshore companies is based above all on tax agreements with other countries, allowing no double taxation of income. The package of tax benefits has been eroded by the Netherlands, which revised its legislation on investment subsidiaries. In 1980 talks continued about the modification of the tax agreement with the U.S.A. Apart from the negotiation the danger exists that the U.S.A. will revise its legislation on the withholding tax on interest payments to foreigners and on capital gains. The abolition of these tax benefits will have serious repercussions on the balance of payments and on public finance which is not very healthy anyway.

Money supply was increasing almost continuously during 1980 owing to net inflow of foreign exchange resulting from the surplus on the balance of payments and to expansion in domestic credit.



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The growth of money supply was less than inflation as measured by the consumer price index, which is now firmly in the double digits. The banking system was able to increase its lending to both the public and the private sector, which consists of consumers and enterprises. Total credit to the private sector rose less than inflation, but the rise of consumptive loans exceeded inflation. This development was not in accordance with the gentlemen's agreement between the Central Bank and the private deposit banks, which stipulated that consumer loans should not grow during 1980 in order to protect the balance of payments and to focus the available financial capacity on productive purposes. The Central Government increased its borrowing by issuing treasury paper and bonds; its overdraft facility with the Central Bank continued to stay close to the limit of f. 125 million.

Domestic interest rates did not change significantly but generally stayed below international levels. Because of higher interest rates abroad some domestic savings, private as well as institutional investors, found it attractive to purchase foreign securities and money market instruments.

The main domestic economic problem continued to be the high level of unemployment. The situation varies greatly from island to island; whereas St. Maarten has full employment and perhaps even a shortage of labour, unemployment on Aruba is estimated between 5 and 10 percent and on Curaçao at about 20 percent of the work force.

This high level of unemployment is partly due to a decrease in jobs in the oil industry as a result of a far-reaching process of automation which started in the 1950s.

Since then government policy has not been able to attract the necessary investments in order to absorb the growing number of jobless.

The tourist sector created quite a few employment opportunities and so did ships repairing and the

oil storage facilities as well as the free trade zones and the offshore activities. In particular the labour intensive tourist sector appeared to be the mainstay for economic development on St. Maarten and Aruba. The latter is planning to expand this sector by raising hotel capacity from the present 2.200 rooms to 3.200 rooms within three years and hopes by doing so to absorb the existing unemployment. Tourism should also be able to absorb some of the relatively high unemployment on Curaçao. However, this island lacks a policy plan and in fact was not able to raise its hotel capacity for quite some years. Although tourism still appears to have good prospects, the attention of the island government is dispersed on a large number of projects which in fact will not provide all the necessary employment opportunities.

At the moment it is estimated that about 10.000 men and women, most of them not older than 25 years and without working experience are looking for work. Unemployment in Curaçao has reached the point of causing severe social tension and finds expression in, among other features, a rising crime rate. The present projects include a cement factory, a ship-demolition joint venture, a trade center, a ship elevator for the Drydock company, the construction of a container port and the expansion of free trade zones by allowing industrial plants to establish there.

Although these projects certainly will alleviate the employment situation, the jobs created will not be sufficient to reduce unemployment considerably, in particular in view of the annual number of school leavers.

Generally speaking the economic problem for the islands that constitute the Netherlands Antilles is to keep their service-oriented economy competitive in terms of both quality and price of the services rendered to foreigners.

Besides, Curaçao faces the difficult task to reduce its unemployment rate to an acceptable level within a relatively short period of time. ■



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Turning the tide for ebbing cruise tourism

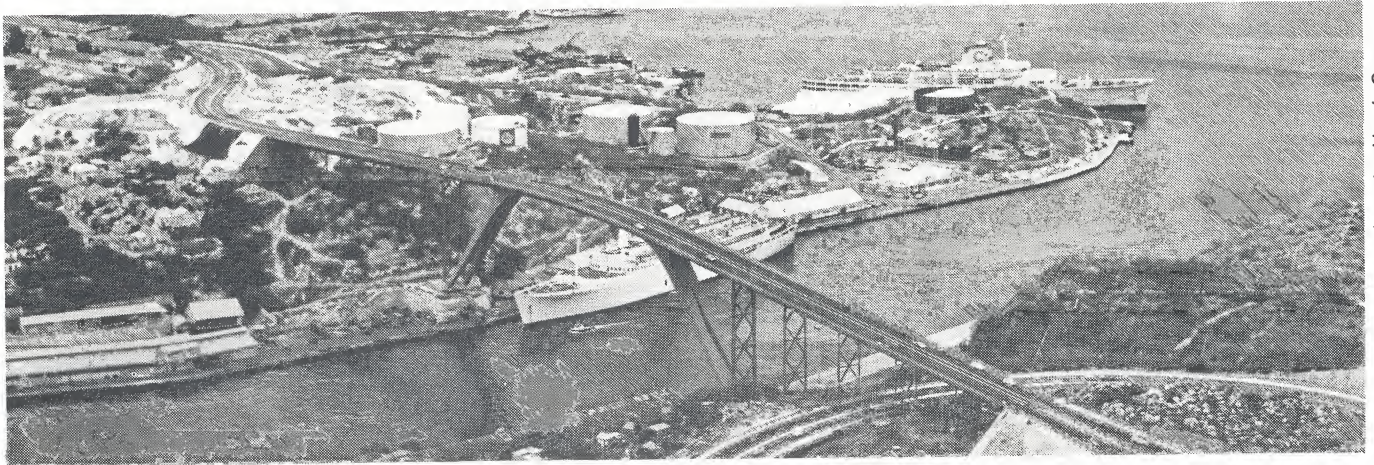


photo by Hart's Camera

TV's *loveboat* may be dream merchandise for millions, cruises are no longer. Once the prerogative of the very rich this type of tourism is now attracting increasingly large numbers from the middle classes.

Offering weeklong trips for little more than \$US 100.— per day, shipping companies are continually extending the number of their cruises, enlarging ships or buying new ones to meet the growing demand. For obvious reasons a much favoured area the Caribbean has seen a veritable boom of cruise tourism during the past 8 years. With exception, however, of the Antillean Leewards, in particular Curaçao, where the number of cruise-ship calls has declined steadily since 1977. Reason why the Curaçao Chamber of Commerce and the Commissioner of Tourism embarked on a thorough research hoping to reverse this negative trend.

The main reason why the Antillean Leewards have become less attractive to cruise operators is the sharp rise of oil costs. Most Cruise Ship Lines have as base-ports either Miami (USA) or San Juan (Puerto Rico). To save on fuel they prefer the shorter cruises along the islands in the North-East Caribbean. Aruba and Curaçao are still included

in some cruise-itineraries only because a call to nearby South American ports still holds excitement for a fair number of passengers.

A second reason well worth considering is the character change of cruise tourism. Passengers are no longer the idle rich who love to go on a shopping spree. The cruise-tourist of today does not have much to spend and is very conscious of the price difference between his home town Mall and the mainstreet shops in Aruba and Curaçao. What he does like to see is local colour and exactly on that score the islands mentioned have not kept abreast of developments. An expert study by the Independent Maritime Bureau on request of the Curaçao Chamber of Commerce has revealed that the Port of Curaçao lends itself extremely well to cruise ship operations. As a consequence plans are being developed to create facilities making Curaçao a feasible base-port for Cruise-Lines wishing to operate in this part of the Caribbean. As cruise operators are already flying in their passengers to e.g. Miami and San Juan from all over the USA and Canada, the distance to Curaçao seems no serious obstacle. Moreover the above mentioned cruise base-ports are already being used beyond capacity, so that a

new one would be most welcome. The growing demand for alternative cruise itineraries might make the possibility of cruises along the North coast of South-America attractive to cruise operators.

The imminent reorganisation of the Curaçao Harbour (see page 17) resulting in the concentration of cruise ship berthing at the Anna Bay or Motet offers a welcome opportunity to improve on the already existing facilities. Commissioner A. Diaz, realising the urgent need for a passenger terminal, if only to make Curaçao more attractive for regular cruise ship calls, has ordered a feasibility study. AR learned that some members of the committee conducting the research are in favour of constructing a temporary terminal (which could be completed by November '81) in anticipation of a definite one. Expectations are that the feasibility study will be ready within four months.

The imaginative thinking shown by the Curaçao Chamber and the Island Commissioner do give hope that with a view to the character change of cruise-tourism also the touristic infra-structure of the island will be improved in the near future. A must if the island is to recapture a fair share of the cruise market. ■

PEOPLE

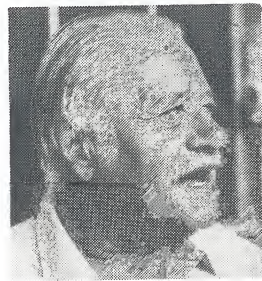


Chairing a team of the Los Andes University (Merida, Venezuela) which is to review 20 years of socio-political developments in the ABC-islands, prof. Rita Giacalone de Romero recently visited Aruba and Curaçao to meet university staff members, librarians and a score of politicians. The research, which also covers the Eastern Caribbean and French Antilles, is aimed at providing Venezuela with a background for political decision making with regards to the Caribbean. The Antillean chapter will be written by dr. F. J. T. Lee, political scientist (PhD, University of Frankfurt, Germany) and avowed marxist. An Antillean scholar will be invited to contribute a paper reflecting the Antillean viewpoint.

Prof. de Romero, who holds degrees in history of the universities of Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Indiana (USA) expects the publication of the team's findings by 1983. ■

'I have a great confidence in the future of the Netherlands Antilles!' No idle words from the lips of a man who spent a lifetime reporting the weal and woe of the Antillean people. Recently visiting Curaçao mr. J. van de Walle (68), first editor of the 'Beurs en Nieuwsberichten' and 30 years head of the West-Indian department of Radio Nederland, reminisced with AR about past experiences and acquaintances. He recalls how Tony Prince helped him out on the sports section, still one of the strong point of the Beurs. Close friend 'doctor' da Costa Gomez advised him against the use of papiamento in Radio Nederland's

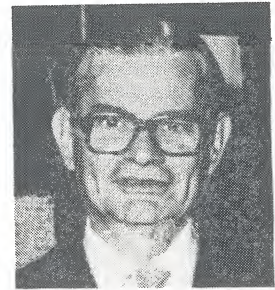
broadcasts, in order not to hamper the knowledge of Dutch in the Antilles. Van de Walle chuckles remembering the postscripts young Boeli van Leeuwen scribbled underneath his literary contributions for radio programmes: pecunia ta schaars (hard up for some bread). But he derived the most satisfaction from broadcasting the respective Round Table Conferences held in The Hague. Thanks to an intervention by dr. da Costa Gomez



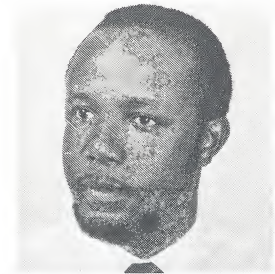
Radio Nederland became the first to be allowed to broadcast directly from the Dutch parliament. Speaking from an intimate knowledge of 50 years political development in the Caribbean mr. van de Walle is quite hopeful about the Antilles' future. Ethnic and cultural differences, at the root of the desintegration process in many a Caribbean society, do not play an important role in the Antilles, he states. Mr. van de Walle is of the opinion that the Antilles have a far better chance to survive than Surinam, ex-partner in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. ■

The first doctorate to be awarded by Antilles' young University (18 months) was conferred on mr. W. R. Boom during a solemn ceremony on November 28th of last year.

Mr. Boom a former Attorney General and at present vice-chairman of the Advisory Council of the Netherlands Antilles submitted a thesis on 'Drugs in the Netherlands Antilles'. Limiting himself to the non-medical use of and illicit traffic in drugs, he describes the development of the drugs legisla-



tion in the Antilles in the broader context of the international opium conventions and the Dutch interpretation thereof. Mr. Boom shows himself strongly in favour of decriminalization of soft drug use. He refers in particular to marijuana and hashish suggesting a change of legal qualification from felony into misdemeanor as far as the illicit use of and the traffic in these drugs are concerned. ■



Compliments regarding AR's cover design go to mr. Lucio Leito, acting manager of the Curaçaosche Courant N.V. Mr. Leito (46) received his graphic training in Amsterdam (Holland) and has been with the afore mentioned Printing and Publishing House for 14 years. During that same period he established himself as an increasingly recognised poet. Discussing his three collections of poems hitherto published, mr. Leito describes his work as 'engaged' poetry rather than artful play with words and concepts. He supports the phonetic orthography of papiamento and regrets the lack of cooperation between linguists and the press to further the cause of one spelling. Contributing in no small measure to AR, mr. Leito hopes to publish a book on the energy crisis and its consequences for the Caribbean during 1981. ■

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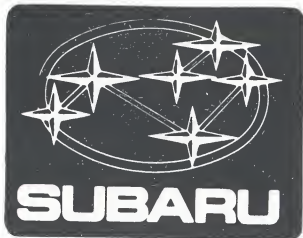
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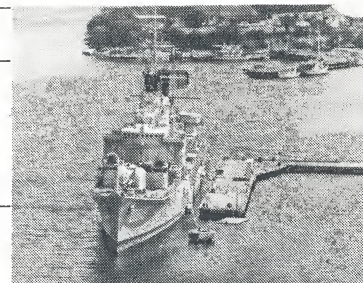
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RTC's Sword of Damocles

Unless some clearcut political choices are made now the Antilles run the risk of drifting into a military vacuum later.

An irrevocable process of change in relations will be set in motion next month when the Antilles and Holland sit down for the first of a series of Round Table Conferences. Meeting in the Hague representatives of both countries will, whatever else they may come up with, work toward the termination of the present arrangement, which unites them since 1954 in one Kingdom. Although most observers foresee a kind of commonwealth structure as the outcome, they expect the talks to be long and complicated. Abrogating the 'Statuut' implies solving a number of very serious problems, not in the least with regard to the safeguarding of the Antilles' territorial integrity and internal law and order.

During the preparatory talks (KWG) this issue of 'defence' brought to the fore sharply conflicting views between the two Kingdom-partners.

Unless an acceptable solution is found, no viable future can be expected for the Antilles either as a whole or for any of the islands individually. Their highly vulnerable position, caused by the islands' smallness and the distances between them, make a solid defence arrangement an absolute necessity for survival. Recent developments in the Caribbean prove this beyond doubt.

"Dutch still in charge"

When in 1954 the colonial era was ended and both countries joined as equal partners in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, all matters concerning internal and external security were entrusted to the Crown. This shared responsibility for the defence of territorial integrity was effected by maintaining a continuous presence of the Royal Dutch Navy in the Antilles. Even though the stationing of one destroyer, three planes and six hundred marines can only be considered a token presence in military terms, it did create the desired effect. Moreover a preventive influence emanated towards maintaining internal law and order, which in principle is entrusted to the local police-force.

Since those days, when the Statuut was drawn up, nothing much has changed. External defence is still completely taken care of by the Dutch. No Antillean defence-force has been set up. Attempts in that direction were cut short by political developments in 1977. Withdrawal of the Dutch Navy, which seems inevitable when the Statuut is abolished, would leave the Antillean government without any means to fulfill its obligation to safeguard the country's integrity. It would also face grave problems

with regard to the internal security, as the police-force is in no position to cope with any real emergency because of a structural lack of personnel. It frequently has to call on the Curaçao Volunteer Corps (VKC), a civilian defence organisation, for assistance.

The dimension of the problem becomes even clearer, when it is realised that the Antilles will never either financially or physically be able to take care of their own defence in an adequate manner.

'Opposing Views'

The realisation of these facts caused the Antillean participants to the KWG-talks, preparing the Round Table Conference, great concern. They correctly envisaged the possibility of a military vacuum, which might have dire consequences for the safety, stability and prosperity of the Antilles. Recent happenings in the Eastern-Caribbean show that such a vacuum invites infiltration by foreign or so-called revolutionary powers. The high frequency with which Russian trawlers call at the Curaçao port has not gone unnoticed. The apparent reason of allowing their crews shore-leave is taken by few to be the sole motive for the visits.

And although there is no reason to suspect Venezuela of any acquisitive inclinations, it can hardly be

expected to allow even the possibility of a threat to its own security to develop so close by.

As a consequence the Antilleans formulated as their opinion that Holland ought to continue sharing responsibility for the external defence even after the Statuut is replaced by whatever other structure of relationship. The Dutch on the other hand pointed out that military matters must of necessity always be the government's responsibility controlled by parliament. Sharing the burden of defence after the Antilles have obtained independence would imply undesirable political influence by the Dutch in Antillean affairs. Willing to explore the possibilities of a credible solution they refused in no uncertain terms to raise any expectations about a prolonged military presence in post-Statuut times.

Both views no doubt also have their hidden agenda. For the majority of the Antilleans the defence-issue provides a welcome leverage to stall the independence process. The Dutch most certainly will use the issue to pressure the Antilleans into taking a better hold on their own affairs. It also conceivably offers a means of keeping Aruba tied to the other islands.

Matters become even more complicated when it is realised that the military can and should only operate within a political structure. Even if the Antilles could build up a modest defence-force and even if Holland would be prepared to continue helping out on the basis of a carefully worked out agreement, there must first of all be a clear consensus about the future political structure of the Antilles. And exactly on this basic point opinions amongst the Antilleans differ widely. A force controlled by a national government does not agree with Aruba's desire for independence on the basis of international law and loose ties with the other islands.

To shift the responsibility for security matters to the island-governments creates obviously even more problems.

The KWG tried to bridge the differences of opinion by drawing up a recommendation for the RTC suggesting that the Dutch military presence in the Antillean territory should not be abruptly ended at the abrogation of the Statuut. This on condition that during the interim-period real progress will be made with the creation of an Antillean defence force. A proposal which evades the political question and therefore carries little weight. One may even wonder why the Antillean delegates agreed to this proposal, as it can conceivably be used against them at a later date. Not fulfilling the obligation of building up their own force, would give Holland an easy excuse to bail out.

It should in this connection also be realised that the formation of such an Antillean force will take at least six to ten years. In particular since an earlier attempt in this direction, as mentioned before, was strangled by political developments in 1977, putting the clock back rather than forward.

"Antillean Defence Corps"

This attempt was a direct result of the May'69 disturbances. The upheaval was of such a nature that the marines had to assist the police in restoring order. The Dutch public protested loudly. It

seemed to the Dutch completely out of date that their boys were involved in what could rightly be called an internal Antillean matter. A hastily formed committee advised the de-Antilleanisation of the forces and the formation of an Antillean Defence Corps. Conscription of Antilleans had started in the early sixties. Approximately 200 of the 600 marines were by then selected from local recruits. A small number of Antilleans were trained for the rank of sergeant and corporal.

A nucleus for an Antillean corps was therefore already available. A group of experts began in 1973 to draw up the outlines. The Dutch

month Aruba staged a minor revolt to force Holland and the other Antillean islands into recognizing its aspirations for (at least greater) independence. As a result all projects of a centralised national nature were stopped short. None of the successive governments dared touch the issue of a national defence organisation, let alone proceed with the preparations of the AVG. The two military coups in Surinam, ex-partner in the Kingdom, added to this politically inspired prudence a general uneasiness about the project as a whole. The matter was left to the KWG to discuss and to the RTC to decide about.

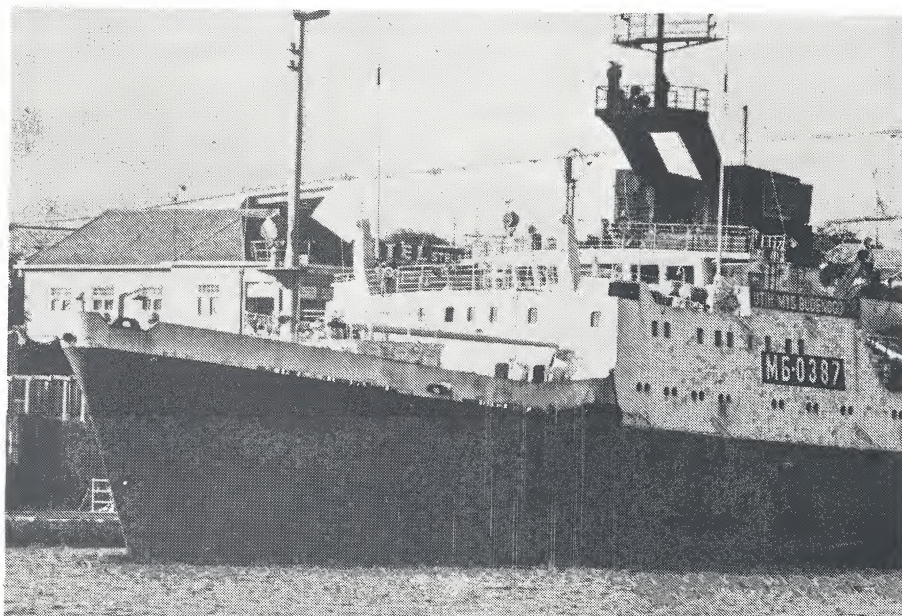


photo by Roger Snow

Russian trawler: frequent visitors.

agreed to keep the trained cadre of sergeants and corporals under the weapons. They also started to prepare for the eventual handing over of their marine-barracks on Curaçao by building new premises on their naval establishment.

In 1977 mr. H. G. Raven was appointed coordinator for the soon to be realised Antillean Defence Force (AVG). A retired Dutch naval officer was recruited by the Antillean government as adviser. The Hague reacted positively to the developed plans and all indications were that generous funds would be made available. The AVG was about to be born.

In august 1977, however, a serious setback occurred. During that

Frustration resulted. Mr. Raven and his staff continued with their paperwork without any certainty about the future. The adviser's contract expired. The by then available barracks were left partly uninhabited inviting dilapidation. Worst of all, the group of sergeants and corporals, some of whom had been waiting ten years without promotion and retirement arrangements, were left in the cold. (Apparently prime-minister Martina has recently discussed an alleviation of their plight with the Dutch government)

Political decision imperative

From all that has been said before it is clear that the foremost

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challenge facing the Round Table Conference is to decide on the future political structure of the Antilles and its relation to the Netherlands. All possible options concerning external and internal security presuppose such a decision.

Next it must be taken into account that the Antilles will never be in a position to take care of their external defence themselves. To ensure a climate of stability in post-Statuut times, essential for the economic development of the country, some form of assistance will have to be obtained with regards to defence. As the Antillean KWG-delegates pointed out, it seems in accordance with historical developments that Holland takes this task upon itself.

But obviously such a decision will depend heavily on what the Antilles will contribute themselves. The least and also the most that can be expected is a serious effort to take care of their internal security including the capacity to cope with riots, terrorism, smuggling and to carry out coastguard tasks. This may be achieved by either enlarging the police-force or setting up a modest military corps like the proposed AVG. The KWG-report suggests the latter possibility. Much depends, however, on the willingness of the islands, including Aruba, to join forces on this issue. Developments in the Eastern-Caribbean, where Barbados, St. Lucia

and St. Vincent are involved in creating a regional coastguard, may convince them that small islands cannot but cooperate in matters of this kind.

The realisation of such an Antillean effort will not only be of great importance for the maintaining of internal law and order, but will no doubt also be decisive in obtaining the necessary defence-assistance. ■

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FROM THE KWG-REPORT

Under the Statuut the external defence of the Antilles is the responsibility of the Kingdom. Through abrogation of the Statuut these statutory responsibilities, including the military obligation of the Netherlands connected therewith, will come to an end.

The Antillean members have voiced their concern about this prospect. They are of opinion that due to the small scale of the Antilles and the geographical position of the islands the creation of a military vacuum cannot be prevented in that case.

There is a clear and fundamental difference between the Antillean and the Dutch points of view with regard to the responsibility for the external defence of the Antilles in the post-Statuut situation.

The Antilleans allege that they consider defence essential as a guarantee for their security, stability and prosperity, but that they are not able to take care of this defence by themselves, so that the Netherlands have to bear co-responsibility therefor.

The Dutch on the other hand allege that independence also means responsibility for one's own affairs, certainly where it concerns such fundamental matters of the body politic as integrity of one's territory, defence policy and control of the armed forces.

Notwithstanding these differences between the Antillean and Dutch points of view with regard to the responsibility for the external defence of the Antilles in the post-Statuut situation the KWG has made an effort to bridge the gap between the two views.

In the KWG agreement has been reached on:


- evaluation of the political/military situation to the effect that the joint opinion is that the Antilles are situated in a region very vulnerable in many respects;
- prevention of a military vacuum in the post-Statuut situation;
- making use of the transition period to start with the set up of the Antillean defence.

Proceeding from the willingness expressed by the Antillean members to make a real effort with regard to their own defence and towards joint defence co-operation the Dutch members recommended that in the event of a transition period of reasonable length carried out according to plan the Dutch presence not be terminated abruptly at the onset of the post-Statuut era. This naturally also on the condition that during the transition phase progress is actually made with setting up the own Antillean defence. Moreover they feel that in the post-Statuut era military co-operation between the Netherlands and the Antilles must be possible and that this co-operation must be regulated by treaty. However, they are of opinion that promises concerning military guarantees and continuation of Dutch military presence must not be expected. ■

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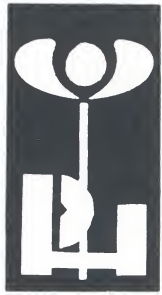
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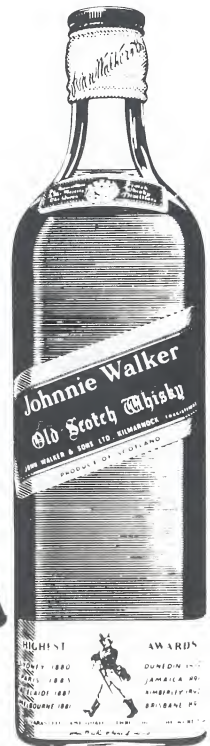
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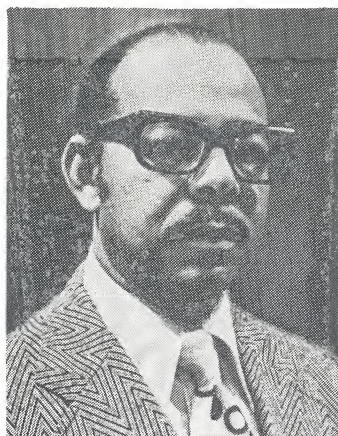
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Second try at public health

photo by R.V.D.



Recently appointed minister of Public Health Boy Hernandez's list of intentions is quite impressive. No newcomer to his present post (Hernandez (53) held the same position in the Rozendal Cabinet) he is well acquainted with the problems and challenges facing Public Health in the Antilles. His observations on a new general hospital for Curaçao, a new psychiatric clinic, expanding preventive health services and reorganizing the Department of Public Health, do certainly not have an overly optimistic ring.

On many occasions in the past Mr. Hernandez declared himself in favour of the construction of a new general hospital on Curaçao. Well aware of the argument that the exploitation might be too expensive for the island, he states: 'costs can never be higher than they are at present. An old building and consequently inefficient organisation is always more costly than a new setup'. 'In order to maintain the present level of public health, which Mr. Hernandez sees as his main objective, a modern and well-equipped hospital is a must. He expects the 'positive' results of a feasibility report and even the finalizing of blueprints before the end of the year.

Asked why the feasibility research is being done by a team of Dutch experts and whether this implies that no Antillean expertise exists, Hernandez declines to answer. The decision to invite the Dutch was taken before he joined the Cabinet (22nd of November 1980), Hernandez explains.

Plans for the construction of a brand new and much needed psychiatric clinic are being worked out. But as this project may take at least four years, a renovation of the existing clinic is presently being undertaken and should be finished this year.

Boy Hernandez realizes fully that maintaining the present standard of public health care implies at least for the time being a continuing dependence on foreign medical know-how. Rating the exchange programme with the medical faculty of the university of Groningen (Holland) very much to the advantage of the Antilles, he plans for more such contracts with other Dutch universities. Such exchange programmes, Hernandez explains, have the added advantage that Antilleans studying at

Dutch universities can do part of their training in the Antilles. He is convinced that this will stimulate them to return to their home-country after graduation.

Preventive health care will be given special attention in the coming years. Hernandez is definitely not satisfied with the present programme.

Deeply concerned about the increase of traffic accidents and the rise of crime, he feels that the preventive health programme should be concerned with fighting these social diseases. He announces the curtailing of tobacco and liquor advertising.

Softspoken Hernandez also envisages a drastic reorganisation of his department. There is, according to him, an urgent need for more medical expertise. At the moment there are only two medically trained people attached to the department. 'But we need at least some 12 specialists including a psychologist and dentist'.

Ellie Wempe

Media policy long overdue

Communication's vital role in modern society is today recognized by most governments. An awareness which in many countries has led to diverse measures guaranteeing optimum dissemination of news and information. Not so in the Netherlands Antilles. At least not yet. Although the geographical and small-market situation create obvious economic problems for all the media, no facilitating policies have been drafted. This despite the fact that the national government has been advised to do so frequently over the past three years.

This lack of an effective media-policy was painfully felt both by newspaper publishers and the public over the past months. A drastic cut in domestic flights by national airline ALM caused a most serious distribution problem. Cancellation of the mid-afternoon

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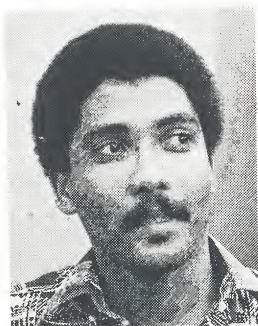
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flights to Aruba and Bonaire disrupted the circulation of papers, of which all but one are printed in Curaçao. Publishers had to resort to hiring private planes causing irregular delivery and a steep rise in costs. Already loosing money on the St. Maarten-connection, this is now also the case with regards to Bonaire. Serving Aruba became if not a loss no longer profitable. Discontinuation of delivery on the smaller islands may be the consequence. Also the journalistic level of the papers may suffer indirectly because of increasingly tight budgets.

Minister of State Jacques Veeris, in charge of media-affairs, lend a sympathetic ear to the despondent Association of newspaper Publishers, (ADP) but shied away from taking action. Known for his thoroughness he preferred awaiting the result of a research into the whole field of communication undertaken at his request by sociologist Leslie Roosberg. Hopes are that mr. Roosberg's study, which should be completed in april 1981,



Leslie Roosberg.

will indeed provide the basis for a much needed media-policy.

Such a policy is long overdue. Not only with respect to the economic needs of the press. The outstanding report 'Communication in the Netherlands Antilles' by mr. Th. H. Oltheten, director of the Dutch Government's Publishing House, already in 1977 stressed the importance of government planning in order to make better use of communication's many potentials for development. The growing hunger for information in the country asks for up to date technical facilities, trained media-personnel

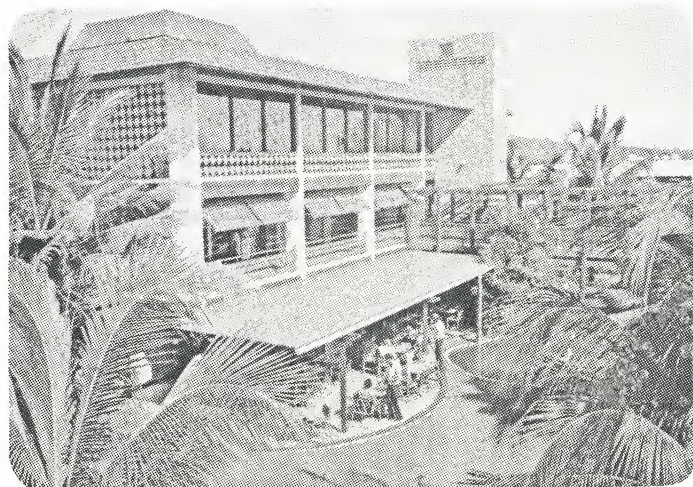
and research possibilities. The economic life lacks the vital impetus of a constant flow of relevant information. The social intercourse between the islands would certainly not be at its present low level if the role of communication in society had been recognized earlier and the currently available possibilities been used. Education too could benefit greatly from tapping communication's still increasing educational potential.

All this has been brought amply to the attention of the Antillean government in recent years. Mr. Roosberg's research may systematize all available data and no doubt even add new dimensions, but time has come that these studies should lead to political action. As the MacBride report observes: there is no longer any room for uncertainty either about the role that communication should play in economic (social and educational) planning, nor about its place in development strategy, nor about the need for resources that should be devoted to it by every nation. ■

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Education not tuned to society's demands

by *Ralph-R. van Breet.*

"Population's low level of skill heart of the problem"

'It has been noted that there is a fairly high rate of unemployment.

At the same time, however, industry and commerce as well as government services are unable to find competent personnel, in particular bookkeepers, accountants, and medium level technicians; in many instances staff has to be recruited from outside the Netherlands Antilles. This, incidentally, also applies to teachers in secondary and even primary schools. The need is not simply for middle-level personnel but also for a better training of skilled workers, for example in the hotel industry. The implication of this situation with respect to the national system of education (the largest industry!) will be obvious, namely that education should not merely be regarded as a social or cultural benefit, or as an economic benefit for individuals, but should also contribute to the economic growth of the nation as a whole' so reads the 1976 (1) UNESCO Report on Antillean education.

Complaints that education in the Netherlands Antilles is not tuned to the demands of the labour market are numerous. Technical schools are supposed to be out of date because so many graduates end up as 'waiters' or 'dealers' in the hotel industry. The educational system is said to contribute insufficiently to the formation of middle-management. And many, in particular employers, speak wistfully of those good old MULO-days, when students still recieved sound and solid training.

Consequently many proposals aimed at attuning education to the demand for skilled personnel have been put forward. As early as 1964 the 'Stream Committee Curacao' recommended the creation of more vocational training besides the traditional MULO. A proposal that led eventually to the ETAO (2).

In 1971 a study group of the department of education-inspection launched the idea to arrive at a new type of school in between secondary education (VWO, HAVO and MAVO) on the one hand and primary technical education on the other in order to

provide vocational training for office employees, the service rendering professions, as well as for business, hotel and tourism personnel.

Although since the introduction of the so-called Mammoth system in 1968 no fundamental changes have been made in the structure of secondary education, the range of choices within vocational training has increased steadily. Domestic-science schools in Aruba now offer continuation courses for salesgirls, seamstresses and childcare. In addition these schools recently started with continuation training for the hotel industry (Bar & Restaurant and House-keeping) and service rendering professions (sickcare and old people welfare). ETAO-schools in Aruba offer advanced training for shop and office personnel. Preparations are being made to remodel this type of education into a four year vocational training including specialisation in tourism. Technical schools have extended their evening courses thereby creating specialisation opportunities for those who cannot go to the secondary level. In the realm of secondary vocational education a school of administration was established some years ago.

Moreover a hotel-school annex a fifty room hotel is being built with financial assistance from the European Economic Community.

As a result the number of students following vocational education has increased steadily since 1960 both in an absolute sense and as compared to the figures of general secondary education.

INDEX 1: Development of secondary education, Aruba 1960 - 1980

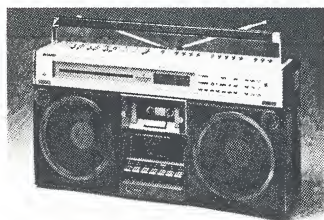
| Year | Number of students | General Sec. Ed. | Primary and Sec. Voc. Ed. |
|------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| | | AVO | LBO/MBO |
| 1960 | 2737 | 1972 (72%) | 765 (28%) |
| 1970 | 5366 | 3105 (58%) | 2261 (42%) |
| 1980 | 6123 | 3209 (52%) | 2914 (48%) |

This growth of vocational education is mostly due to an increased male participation.



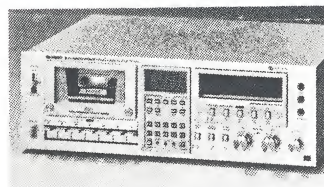
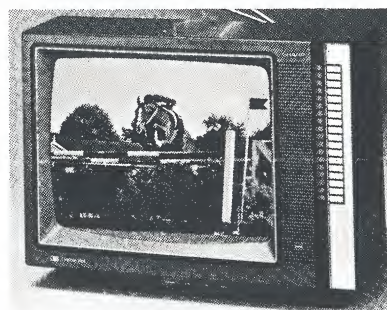
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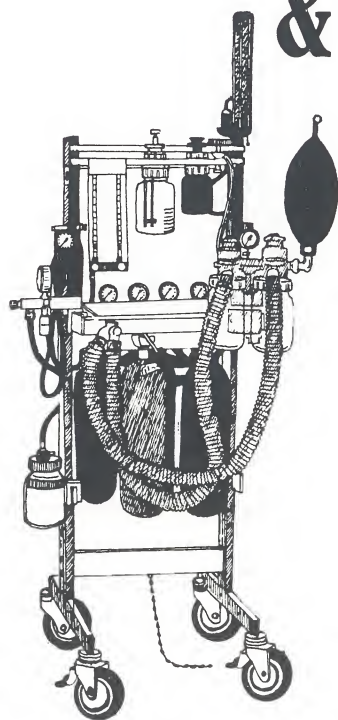
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| Year | Number of Students (male) | General Sec. Ed. AVO | Primary and Sec. Voc. Ed. LBO/MBO |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1970 | 2664 | 1371 (51%) | 1293 (49%) |
| 1975 | 3193 | 1344 (42%) | 1849 (58%) |
| 1980 | 3074 | 1312 (43%) | 1762 (57%) |
| Year | Number of Students (female) | | |
| 1970 | 2702 | 1734 (64%) | 968 (36%) |
| 1975 | 3197 | 1906 (60%) | 1291 (40%) |
| 1980 | 3049 | 1897 (62%) | 1152 (38%) |

The quantitative growth of vocational education cannot be judged entirely positive, however, for although secondary vocational training did increase considerably, within the total picture primary technical education remains extremely dominant.

| Year | Number of Students | Primary Voc LBO | Primary Techn. LTS | Sec. Voc. MBO |
|------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1975 | 3140 | 2861 (91%) | 1397(44%) | 297 (9%) |
| 1976 | 3335 | 3069 (92%) | 1540 (46%) | 266 (8%) |
| 1977 | 3183 | 2911 (91%) | 1452 (46%) | 272 (9%) |
| 1978 | 3200 | 2841 (89%) | 1354 (42%) | 359 (11%) |
| 1979 | 3131 | 2678 (86%) | 1328 (42%) | 453 (14%) |
| 1980 | 2914 | 2437 (84%) | 1238 (42%) | 477 (16%) |

Considering recent changes in the Antillean (and Aruban) economy in particular the decline of the secondary sector (see index 4) this dominant position of primary technical education must be labelled an anachronism.

| | 1961 | 1966 | 1972 | 1974 | 1978 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Primary Sector | 2.0% | 1.7% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 1.0% |
| Secondary sector (including utilities & building) | 41.9% | 35.6% | 29.6% | 25.6% | 21.0% |
| Tertiary sector (incl. governm.) | 56.1% | 62.8% | 69.4% | 73.3% | 78.1% |

This predominance of primary technical education is the logical consequence of the way our educational system is organised. Its hierarchical nature and the division into categories imply a selection process which downgrades primary vocational training into a mere residuum.

Youngsters failing the requirements for secondary education in general are automatically referred to primary vocational education. In the case of boys this usually means: the primary technical school. As these students did not do too well in primary school to begin with, one need not wonder about the low level of skill of Aruba's labour force.

| GRADE | I | II | III | IV | V | VI |
|--------|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| Total: | 11 | 27 | 34 | 40 | 41 | 47 |
| Boys | 12 | 29 | 38 | 45 | 46 | 51 |
| Girls | 11 | 25 | 30 | 33 | 36 | 43 |

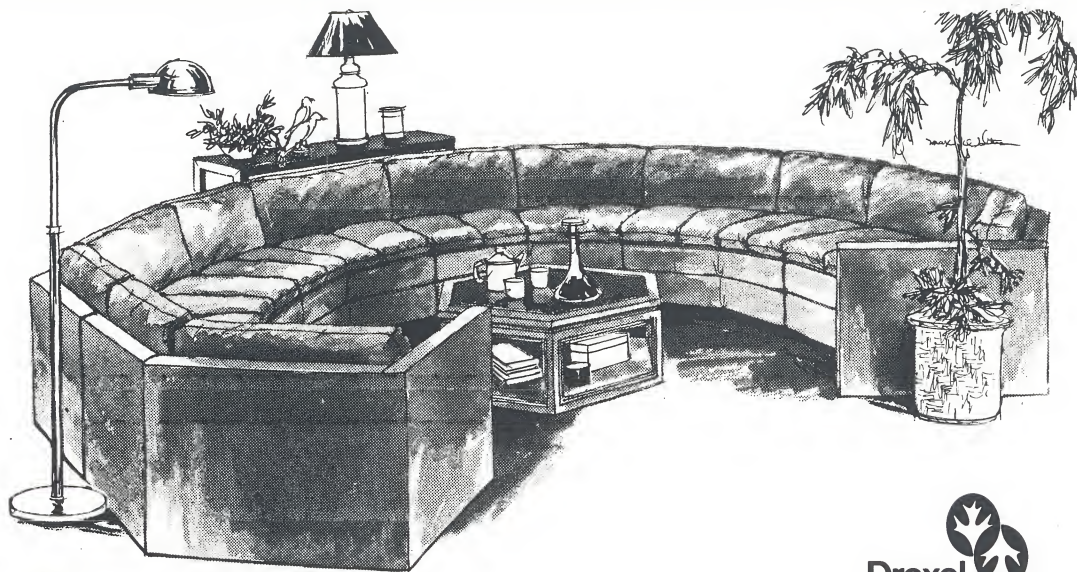
| Level of training | Male (%) | Female (%) | Total (%) |
|-------------------|----------|------------|-----------|
| unschooled | 44 | 39 | 42 |
| semi-schooled | 14 | 16 | 15 |
| primary | 23 | 25 | 24 |
| secondary | 8 | 9 | 8 |
| higher ed. | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| unknown | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Total: | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Complaints about the gap between education and the labour market are not limited, however, to the realm of vocational training. One of the most often heard grievances is education's failure to contribute sufficiently to the formation of middle management, resulting in a heavy dependency on qualified personnel from abroad. A fact confirmed in no uncertain terms by the government study-group on integral development, WIO. Its 1979 report 'Hopi man sin pan' reveals a very high degree of reliance on foreign skill in the more developed economies of Aruba, Curacao and particularly Sint Maarten. Aruba's need for imported know-how apparently even surpasses that of Curacao.

In connection to this it should be noticed that during the past twenty years day school enrolment in Aruba increased steadily. Between 1960 and 1972 the age-specific enrolment ratio went up from 69.7 to 85.6 (in 1972 the figure for boys was 86.7 and for girls 84.4).

The gross level enrolment ratio for secondary education rose from 46.0 in 1972 to 54.2 in 1977 (boys went up from 45.7 to 52.7 and girls from 46.3 to 55.8)

Nevertheless in 1972 non-Antilleans still formed 21.2 % of the Aruban labour force, being over-represented in the private professions (0), administrative and management positions (1), and in



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agriculture, horticulture, cattlebreeding etc(6). In that same year 34% of all leading positions on the island were occupied by foreigners. The latter constituted 44% of those with a secondary or higher educational background.

All of this shows the extent to which Aruba was dependent on qualified personnel from abroad in 1972. A situation which has hardly altered since.

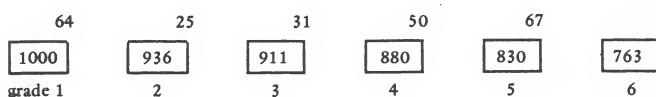
The selective nature of our educational system is one of the main causes for this failure to contribute adequately to the formation of middle management. In particular the flow to secondary education (HAVO/ VWO) is slowed down considerably by it.

| Year | Number of students in continued ed. | HAVO/VWO | Boys | Girls |
|------|-------------------------------------|------------|----------|----------|
| 1975 | 6390 | 860(13.5%) | 337(39%) | 523(61%) |
| 1976 | 6632 | 943(14.2%) | 372(39%) | 571(61%) |
| 1977 | 6496 | 962(14.8%) | 369(38%) | 593(62%) |
| 1978 | 6445 | 900(14.0%) | 374(42%) | 526(58%) |
| 1979 | 6298 | 881(14.1%) | 376(43%) | 505(57%) |
| 1980 | 6123 | 905(14.8%) | 378(42%) | 527(58%) |

And in spite of the rather heavy selection process before admittance to the HAVO/VWO the percentage of those who pass their final examinations is far from satisfactory, in particular where it concerns the HAVO.

| School type | Number of candidates | Passed | Failed |
|-------------|----------------------|---------|---------|
| HAVO | 134 | 92(69%) | 42(31%) |
| VWO | 43 | 40(93%) | 3(7%) |

This waste of talent, caused by the selective character of our educational system does, however, begin much earlier. On the basis of the hypothetical flow of the 1978 cohort through primary (5) we get the following picture of its evolution:



We also find an average input of 8.0 student-years and a wastage of 1532 student-years (25%).

A second reason for the aforementioned failure is the way scholarship policy has been conducted in the past. Undeniably the islands' and national governments have been spending large amounts making continuation education abroad possible for thousands of young Antilleans.

| Budget year | Expenditure, of which: | Income transfer to families |
|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1975 | 1.982.563 (=100) | 1.910.313 (=100) |
| 1976 | 2.204.228 (111.2) | 2.170.271 (113.6) |
| 1977 | 2.386.820 (120.4) | 2.292.413 (120.0) |
| 1978 | 4.482.972 (226.1) | 4.192.602 (219.5) |
| 1979 | 7.818.500 (394.4) | 7.303.300 (382.3) |
| 1980 | 10.040.700 (506.5) | 9.401.500 (492.1) |

The number of students studying at institutions abroad on scholarships is indeed considerable.

| | Ned. | U.S.A. | P. Rico | Col. | Ven. | Region | Total |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| (Neth. Antilles, 1979. excl. Crown and Sticusa scholarships and privately paid studies) | | | | | | | |
| Aruba | 364 | 194 | 6 | 46 | 3 | 5 | 600 |
| Bonaire | 30 | - | - | - | - | - | 30 |
| Curaçao | 522 | 31 | 40 | 27 | 10 | 25 | 655 |
| Windwards | 13 | - | - | - | - | - | 13 |
| Total | 911 | 225 | 46 | 73 | 13 | 30 | 1298 |

Obviously the problem is not the extent of the scholarship programme, but rather the policy behind it.

C. A. Eidsen observes that (6): 'the Curacao market is characterised by a shortage of jobs for persons with a lower vocational education (or less) and a shortage of persons educated at tertiary level. With regards to the latter category a temporary solution is found in contracting foreign (mainly Dutch) know-how With a view to the Antilleanisation of management (executive level), an expressed wish of both the authorities and industry, and the shortage of specialists a planned scholarship programme is essential. Until now scholarship policy has been quite liberal, not in the least because of the dispersion of decision making between the Crown, the National and Island governments, and private institutions. Scholarships were granted on the basis of ability i.e. talent for the self chosen field of study was the decisive criterion and not the community's need for specific specialisations.'

Consequently there is a strong concentration in the fields of social science and education. A predominance largely due to the generally traditional career choices of female HAVO-graduates.

INDEX 11: Distribution according to study direction of Aruban scholarship students in the Netherlands, 1978

| Study directed towards: | Number of students: |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Agriculture | 7 |
| Technics | 64 |
| Health care | 46 |
| Tutorial work | 109 |
| (incl. education) | (61) |
| Administrative work | 41 |
| Hotel/Tourism | 5 |
| Other | 18 |
| Total | 290 |

The discrepancy then between education and the labourmarket, causing frictional unemployment on the one hand and on the other hand a disproportionate dependency of the Aruban labourmarket on specialized knowhow from abroad, is undeniable.

Solutions have hitherto been sought in widening the range of primary and secondary vocational training, and setting priorities on basis of demand for the awarding of scholarships. But this does not touch the heart of the problem, which is not the shortage of certain specializations, but rather the population's general level of education and/or skill. (see index 6).

Reshaping and widening the scope of vocational training on all levels and planning of the scholarship programme are no doubt useful and indeed necessary, but first and foremost attention must be given to basic education, which after all lays the foundation for all continuation training.

This becomes even more important, when it is realised that the social function of education is not limited to producing skilled people! If education is to give a real contribution to the economic, political, social and cultural development of Aruba, there is no choice but to upgrade the general level of education of the entire population.

The writer of this article therefore advocates the introduction of a more protracted period of general and non-selective education for the agegroup 4-15, during which a sound foundation can be laid both for further studies and a more immediate partaking in the production process. ■

(1) UNESCO: Education: Issues and priorities for development (Paris, 1976)

(2) Streamcommissie Curaçao: A.A.-V.O.: Rapport betreffende wenselijkheid van een nieuw schooltype (Curaçao, 1964)

(3) G. Gruppelaar et al: Een visie op de toekomstige structuur van het voortgezet onderwijs in de Nederlandse Antillen (Curaçao, 1971)

(4) WIO: Hopi man sin pan! Ke ubo di mañan (Curaçao, 1979)

(5) M.C.O. Helder: Het zittenblijversprobleem op Aruba (Aruba 1980)

(6) C. A. Eisdén: Naar een meer gericht beurzenbeleid voor de Nederlandse Antillen: kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve aspecten van vraag en aanbod (Rotterdam), 1979)

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Caribbean plantation-literature

BY AUTHORS USING THE DUTCH LANGUAGE

by Wim Rutgers

Both H. Hoetink and R. A. Römer mention the "plantation-economy" as the foremost uniting factor of Caribbean society. The plantation as a miniature state formed the nucleus of the social relationships, in which European capital and involuntary negro toil were each other's antipodes.

Römer remarks in "*Korsow; a sociological survey of a Cribbean society*:" "Plantations, slavery and negroes have laid the basis for the great socio-cultural and cultural uniformity shown by Caribbean societies". In his *The split community in the Caribbean; a contribution to the sociology of racial relationships in segmented societies* Hoetink says: "Negroes, slavery, plantations; there you have the characteristics that determined the historical-social uniqueness of the Caribbean. At the same time one should realize that the first two characteristics are each part of an antipode: 'opposite' the negro stood the European colonist, 'opposite' the slave stood his master; thesis and antithesis, locked up within the social unity that the plantation also was."

Römer, following the example of his predecessors, delineated the area where this plantation-economy was to be found as follows: "the islands of the Caribbean archipelago (...), but also the southern states of the United States of North-America, the north coasts of Colombia and Venezuela, the Guyana's and Northern Brazil".

In this article I want to examine in what way the plantations were the subjects of Dutch literature in the Caribbean as delineated by Römer, i.e. the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam.

By plantation-literature I mean the literature that is enacted on the plantations and describes plantation life with its inter-action between masters and slaves. In doing so I will limit myself to the novel.

Proceeding from Hoetink's and Römer's characterizations we find that the plantation society was segmented, with racial, cultural and economic-social differences forming the basis for the sharply segregated worlds of masters and slaves, in which one party exercised absolute power and the other was supposed to show complete subordination. Based on this, two different patterns of behaviour developed, sometimes designated as "masters' behaviour pattern" and "slaves' behaviour pattern". It is not my intention to go into their sociological implications, but I only want to point out what can be expected in the literature. If the latter is indeed the mirror of the culture from which C. G. M. Smit and W. F. Heuvel proceed in *Autonomous; Dutch literature in the Antilles*, this two-sidedness will also manifest itself in the novels.

So we find on the one side the whites: the owner with his wife and children, the young planter's son and the growing planter's daughter, who are often described separately; the manager/director and the white overseer. Sometimes there is a white priest in the picture, who most of the time is not accepted as an equal partner. On the other side lives the coloured population: the *yaya* (nursemaid); the housekeeper; the cook; the negro playmate of the master's little son; the lady companion of the planter's wife; the house personnel; the coachman; the black minstrel; the black overseer (called *bomba*, *vitó* or *basja*); the young attractive female slave as mistress of the white master, overseer or growing son; the slaves who carry out a trade and finally the slaves working in the fields. This entire world of colourful figures, in this consecutive order of mutual distance, inhabits the plantation novel.

Johan van de Walle, who with "*Een vlek op de rug*" (A spot on

the back) (1963) has drawn a very extensive picture of plantation life in all its aspects, in his novel has one of the directors say as follows:

"In this country (...) there live two people, slaves and masters. The first form the majority and supply the labour force, the masters are in the minority, but they rule through intellect and discipline."

As one would expect, the Dutch language as the language of the colonial rulers particularly depicts the way of thinking and the way of life of the white plantation dwellers. In so far as the negro's voice is heard, this is not in Dutch, but in one of the creole languages like Papiamentu in the Netherlands Antilles and Sranan Tongo in Surinam.

Examining the literature written in Dutch, the following classification may be made: 1. Dutch literature written 'ABOUT' the Caribbean by Dutch people who lived there a number of years during past centuries or in more recent times, or by Dutch people who wrote about the area without ever having stayed there; 2. Dutch literature 'OF' the Caribbean, written by authors born and bred there. They are the ones who represent Caribbean literature according to the definition given by Kenneth Ramchand in *The West Indian Novel and its Background*: "The West Indian novel, by which I mean the novel written by the West Indian about the West Indian...".

Although the first group has produced a large number of titles, I will here limit myself to the actual literature of the Caribbean.

In doing so, however, we must take into account the considerable differences that existed and still exist between Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles. The first country had a genuine plantation economy with big plantations, where a small number of whites



Curaçao planter's family at turn of the century.

ruled over large slave forces. The slavery system there was notorious for its cruelty, caused not only by the proportion in numbers, but also by the isolation of many plantations, as a result of which the white man could act as an absolute ruler; the absence of the owner who left the management in the hands of directors who tried to enrich themselves as fast as possible at the expense of the slaves to be able to leave for the mother country as quickly as possible.

This "animus revertendi" already referred to in this way by Governor Mauricius in the eighteenth century, made the exploitation worse.

All these factors contributed to a very hard system, in a climate that in addition was very hot, humid and trying.

Curaçao (as the main island of the Netherlands Antilles) in fact never boasted any real plantations, perhaps with the exception of a few in the western part of the island. In reality it was an island of

commerce, the "landhuizen" and plantations being rather the status symbols and country houses of rich merchants. Although the genuine Curaçao planter considered himself the prince of creation, he in fact was not well-to-do. The relation to the small group of slaves most of the time was much more charitable than in Surinam; the slaves were more capital than labour force.

The writer Marek Decotte, the historian Goslinga's pseudonym, lets us see in *De bullepees* (The bull's pizzle), a volume containing stories about the Curaçao slave period, how afraid the slaves were of being sold to the infamous Surinam.

SURINAM

Although as we have seen Surinam had a real plantation economy, the slave novel does not appear often in literature. In his article "*Fictief verleden; de slaventijd in de Surinaamse belletrise*" (Fictitious past; the slave period in Surinamese belles-lettres) Voorhoeve presumes that they would

rather not be reminded of their servile past: "Behind him he (the negro W.R.) saw only the dishonouring, completely passive period of slavery and farther back a supposed barbarism in Africa. The past was at the most a burden to him, a curb on further development."

The most well-known exception to this rule is the historical novel *De stille plantage* (The quiet plantation), published in 1931 by the Surinamese writer Albert Helman.

When the Edict of Nantes is rescinded in 1685 the main figure Raul de Morhang has to flee France with his wife Josephine and her two sisters Cécile and Agnes for religious reasons.

Via the Netherlands they journey to Surinam in order to start a plantation there, which has to serve as "a state of justice, of proper relationships and proper distribution, as a bulwark, small but solid in the midst of a large state full of plundering, where power oppresses arbitrarily and property is used to crush the

unpropertied classes". In *Bel Exit*, lying isolated far in the interior, a suitable spot is found. Helman describes the beginning, the construction of the plantation, the large, white mansion, the negro quarters, the storehouse, the stables, the drying storehouse for tobacco and a small sugar-mill, as well as the courage needed to win from a primeval forest a piece of cultivated land.

At first the plantation thrives, but after a while it becomes evident that the experiment is doomed to failure. It appears to be impossible to act individually correct in a structurally unjust society. Raoul's vision breaks down through forces from without and within. The neighbouring planters disapprove of the mild treatment Raoul gives his slaves and start working against him; the white official Willem Das does not believe in Raoul's system and gives harsh punishments in spite thereof. Nor can he keep his hands off the young negro women and forces them to have sexual relations with him. Cécile, the youngest sister pines away with homesickness; for her the "animus revertendi" becomes her ruin. Raoul becomes harder and more and more renounces his ideas; he appears to be innerly weak. He definitively fails in his purpose when he allows his basja Isidore to be killed. Nature recovers what she considers rightly hers, sickness and ant-plagues help bring about the destruction of the plantation. The failure is complete. Raoul leaves and goes to England to live there.

A good twenty years later Helman writes about the same theme in *De laaiende stilte* (The blazing stillness). Now he proceeds from a diary kept by Agnes, Raoul's sister-in-law. She is closest to the slaves, because she supervises the work in the fields, but most of all because she is secretly in love with the basja Isidore. This leads to a triangle situation, because Willem Das asks her hand in marriage. The rivals are killed: Willem Das by the slave, Isidore by the neighbouring planters. Agnes is mentally destroyed by all this. Helman shows us that humanity succumbs in the

inhumane slave system. In this second version he chooses the side of the slave much more clearly; Isidore is even compared to Christ. Surinamese criticism of these two novels has been severe. A well-known young author, Leo Henri Ferrier, rejected them with the words: "In them there are slaves who are slaves and also remain slaves."

The story-telling person is omniscient and tells the story as alternately emanating from different figures; but the perspective is never anyone else's than a white person's. The plane of thoughts of the negro is not explored.

Thus these captivating novels are examples of what the plantation novel in Dutch so often is: a report on "a white man's burden".

THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

As we have seen the situation in the Netherlands Antilles was entirely different from the one in Surinam. This is also evident in the literature.

In his short work *Het Curaçaos patroon* (The Curaçao pattern) (1948) C. J. H. Engels describes the plantation house as "the first civilizing centre of the island", an opinion shared by Tip Marugg in his novel *Weekend-pilgrimage* (Weekend-pilgrimage).

The younger author Frank Martinus Arion in his magazine *Ruku* objected strongly against this vision of Engels, because he saw the plantation house more as a symbol of oppression of the negroes. To him the plantation houses were bastions for the fear of the whites. In spite of these opposing views all the Antillean authors are in agreement that the plantation has become obsolete in modern times and has been left to decay.

A historical plantation novel as we see in Surinam is not found in Netherlands Antillean literature. Nor are they present in modern times according to the definition given above. The plantation is only a motif not the central theme.

In *De eerste Adam* (The first Adam) 1966 Boeli van Leeuwen tells us about the period after

1863, the abolition of Dutch slavery, when the freed negroes after the festivities returned to the plantation where the Sjon (Master) sat in his rocking-chair waiting in the twilight. There was poverty on the plantations, for both master and servant, but also an intimacy that left little room for intense hatred. The juridical changes wrought few economic and social changes, the negro continued to work for the former master, be it now for a small wage.

One of the finest descriptions of a Curaçao plantation house is found in Cola Debrot's *Mijn zuster de negerin* (My sister the negress). In this book the main figure Frits Rupperecht, now that his parents have died, returns to the island of his birth after a long stay in Europe in order to receive his inheritance consisting among other things of the plantation Miraflores, but also to find the affection he had missed in Europe.

The house is described extensively with its partition which is symbolic of the social segmentation: the wide terrace, the narrow front and back galleries and the large middle section: "Frits continued to hesitate in front of the doorway leading from the front gallery to the living room (. . .), which in his imagination had meant something like the gate separating two worlds (. . .). In the living-room it were always his father and mother or the white relatives that he met. In the narrow front and back galleries there always lingered lightly the smell of coloured people. A smell he had often felt homesick for in Europe. The smell of the housekeeper, of the estate agent or of other coloured people who came to see his father. His father would on such occasions remain standing in the front-door to speak to them or he would take them along to the room at the end of the front gallery."

With this description of space Debrot demonstrates very beautifully the theme of his novel: the walls erected by the past between the population groups on the island have to be broken down. This finds its culmination when Frits recognizes his half-sister in the young housekeeper, fruit of

his father's sin with a negro servant. He as a white man appears to be bound to the blacks through blood-ties. All the population groups on the island are one. "All of us here on the plantation are perhaps children of yours, Father who art in heaven".

In Cola Debrot's long novel *Bewolkt bestaan* (Cloudy existence) (1948) the main figures Ferdinand and Oscar Bournouille sell their Curaçao plantation to the large oil-refinery Shell, which needs land. This in spite of the belief that selling a plantation will cause the deaths of three members of the former owner's family. The sale-motif appears again and again in the Antillean novel; the old plantation economy with its plantations has to make way for the industrial era. The establishment of the oil-refinery in 1915 brought about greater changes in the economic and social relationships than the abolition of slavery. Once more in Tip Marugg's words: "the old protestant families of former times, the plantation and slave owners and merchants; harsh, dependable, devoutly christian, efficient; the old families that had wielded the scepter with iron hands over the green court-yards, black slaves and white country

houses. They at that time were the pillars that supported the island community. They were kings and their kingdom was the economic centre of a small isolated world all by itself: the country house with the plantation. Where are they now? The green courtyards are no more; all the ground-water has been syphoned out and the wells have turned into black, dry wounds, in which now and then a strong gust of wind will roar gloomily. Only in the rainy season one still sees small corn-fields and cucumber shrubs. Emancipation put an end to the slave class, industrialization removed the heart-beat of the island from the plantation to the factory and the formerly proud country houses are now mutilated sight-seeing spots, reduced to being favourite objects for coloured-slides enthusiasts. (. . .). What has remained of the old families? A small part has been re-europeanised (. . .). A large part has been negronized (. . .). The rest, perhaps the largest part, is dying the slow death of decay of all minority groups, searching for protection in their lost superiority".

In Boeli van Leeuwen's work we also see how together with the decline of the plantations the old

families go to ruin. In *Een vreemdeling op aarde* (A stranger on earth) (1963) he says: "On top of the hills yellow houses, delapidated and affected by time, but grandiose in their decay; surrounding them the huts of former times, covered with coco-palm leaves". And in *De rots der struikeling* (The stumbling rock) (1960) we see how the family perishes within that decay: "In my youth we were completely separated from the negroes in a social sense; yet we lived so close next to each other that deeply human relations were the result." says the white Eddy Lejeune.

Two pages further on he has the following to say about the negroes: "So strong was their sense of relative positions that not until I was grown-up did I hear that one of the playmates I had run around the cunucu (plantation) grounds with and who had sat so shyly on the window-sill on my birthdays was a half-brother of mine. And even then it struck me like a thunderbolt."

But all this belongs to the past; the present shows how old Abraham Lejeune starts going to ruin because of women and alcohol. But despite the economic and physical decline the plantation owner is conscious of his position and still feels that he is the prince of creation as lord and master of his "society in miniature" that the plantation no doubt was.

With the above not more than a first attempt is made at a study of plantation-literature. There are many more plantation novels written in Dutch, describing life on the plantations.

Only a few of the Surinamese and Netherlands Antillean authors could be dealt with within the scope of this article. The analysis should be done in a much more profound way. Besides that it would be important to compare the works written in Dutch with those written in English, French, Spanish and with those written in the various creole languages.

The plantation for that matter would be a good corner stone for a research into the similarities and differences within the whole of what we call Caribbean literature. ■

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Introspection

Interesting gossip

Gossip and backbiting have been considered highly interesting sociological phenomena. In order to establish communication one can chatter idly about others in the same way that a soccer-game or the weather might be discussed or the different types of loaves at Toko Zuikertuintje.

Gossip has the advantage that it does not immediately antagonise the other person – as long as you do not discuss his kin-folk or best friend in derogatory terms – and that it captivates the attention of the other, since you are not merely discussing a commodity in your supermarket, but somebody of flesh and blood, which makes the topic of course more exciting.

“Imagine, last night Johnny called on me to borrow a pair of trousers in order to go home where his wife and friends were waiting for dinner. He refused to give me any details on his mishap and considering his excitement and the lipstick on his belly, I did not pursue the matter”. Such a juicy piece of the latest news from a reliable source is definitely more interesting to us than the misfortune of the Dutch soccer team in Montevideo or the fact that our balance of payments has improved.

In our small community people are interested in each other and that's why other people always make good conversation.

Still one should not underestimate the art of gossip: if in our example you forget to mention Johnny's wife and friends waiting for dinner, Johnny becomes just another sucker who had to climb through the window to get dressed.

Telling it this way shows you are a master in the art of gossip, who leaves out any speculation about what might have happened to Johnny to make him lose his pants. With a refined touch you add “en passant” that there was some lip-

stick on his belly, at the same time showing that you are discreet in such matters by not insisting to know the details.

Your story has hit home!

Of course the question comes: “What the hell do you think happened to the guy?” To which you may add: “well, Johnny is not a man of the world and I think that he went a bit overboard when he started an affair with this excitable singer . . .”

You see, contact has been established. There is now a form of communication with the social function of relativating moral values – which people tend to exaggerate anyhow – and at the same time there is a feeling of belonging together.

“We” participate in an intimate story which should not be told in front of a broad public so “we” confide in each other and stand together, even if only for the fact that we have not been caught with our pants down.

It becomes something completely different, however, if I tell my friend that Johnny gave his excitable singer a beautiful diamond as a Christmas present, but the diamond fell and shattered into pieces . . .

The indignation – on both sides of the conversation – will be obvious: it is not proper to cheat! And one should treat a mistress generously and like a gentleman!

This double standard in morals is something we have come to accept with grace! It is not correct of course to have a mistress when you are married, but taking into consideration that you do it discreetly and that you treat her “gentlemanly”, it might even give you a certain standing. “A good rating” as they say in circles of television executives.

Our indignation at Johnny's conduct is justified we feel, since Johnny infringed upon a “norm”: an expectation of acceptable conduct; not the moral value. The consequence is that he is punished by the “gossip”, which now has the character of “back-biting”. And Johnny immediately starts to lose “standing” and he might become an outcast in our social-group if

indeed that “diamond” was the reason for his untimely and undressed departure: Johnny is a scoundrel and I won't sit next to him at the Kiwanis-meeting (unless Johnny has other interesting qualities!).

Social communication and social control through gossip and backbiting is a lovely and “delicious” way of living together and showing that we care!

The Caribbean islands with their heterogeneous and complex societies have always felt a strong urge to relativate through gossip with humour. It is not as many believe the happy-go-lucky attitude of the coloured population, nor the ever-shining sun that create the need to smile, but simply the enormous tension we have to bear trying to maintain the social structures, and living so close together on a small island without the rigours of a Calvinistic belief.

In this reference it is important to note that lately the quality of gossip and back-biting has deteriorated. There are even people who pretend not to give a hoot for the personal affairs of other people, as if we were living in just another big city.

How do we ever qualify for independence if we have no escape valves for social tension on this island? Our government has kept itself completely occupied with the economic and financial problems it has created.

Our “tambu” has been neglected and lately also our gossip has become meager.

It even happened once that I did not receive one good piece of gossip in four consecutive days.

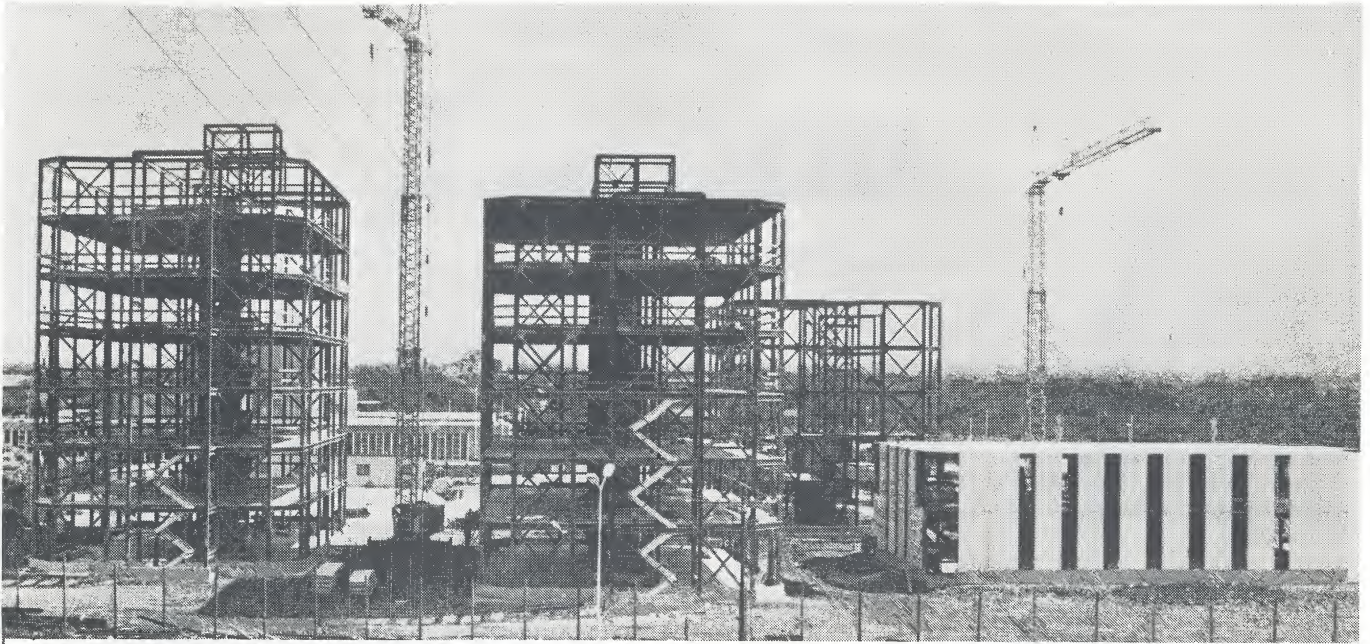
We should institute a ministry of “gossip” (like a department of health) with proper checks and controls from our legislative council, to care for public sanity and social behaviour. Lately everybody has been taking themselves too seriously and that is no way to cope with the problems of the coming independence.

We need more and better gossip.

By the way! Did I tell you that Johnny did not get the pants from me and that I punctured the tires of his car?

Now, guess how he got home. ■

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I. Kristensen: 25 jaar Carmabi-onderzoek.

A survey of 25 years of marine-biological research by the Caribbean Marine Biological Institute in Curaçao. Published by STINAPA, Documentation series no. 7 P.O.Box 2090, Curacao.

Wil Nagelkerken: Coral Reef Fishes

Recording the beauty of the coral reefs around Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao the writer specially devotes his attention to the coralfish: 'ideal photo-models for a book about coral reefs.'

Written in English (with a Papiamento translation) the book contains 121 colored pictures of a wide variety of coral fishes.

Published by the Island Territory of Curacao.

Printed by 'de Curacaosche Courant NV'.

Mickey Hart: Mi Zjar.

Collection of poems in Papiamento illustrated by Ellis Juliana.

Published by Edison Tinashi, Curacao.

B. B. Jagt: Onder de Wolkendans.

Novel, which has Curacao as background both in a geographical and historical sense. Mr. Jagt, who spent several years on Curacao as a high school

teacher, concentrates in particular on the role of the expatriates (Dutch) in the community.

Published by Elsevier, Amsterdam.

Schrijvers Prentenboek van de Nederlandse Antillen.

A picture book about Antillean writers and their works. Beautifully designed the book contains a wealth of pictures both of writers and manuscripts.

Published by De Stichting voor Culturele Samenwerking (Sticusa) Amsterdam and het Nederlands Letterkundig Museum en Documentatiecentrum te Den Haag.

Peter Hoefnagels and Shon W. Hoogenbergen: Antilliaans Spreekwoordenboek.

A dictionary of Papiamento proverbs. The writers have tried to compile as many papiamento sayings as possible, some of which are no longer being used. A litteral translation of the Papiamento is added together with explanatory notes (in Dutch).

The book is illustrated with drawings by Elis Juliana.

Published and printed by 'De Curacaosche Courant N.V.'.

Price: NAf. 8.50

Sonia Cuales: Women, reproduction and foreign capital in Curaçao.

Published in 'Caraïbisch Forum' vol. 1, no 2.

P.O.Box 16797, 2500 BT. Den Haag.

A.M. Roosenburg: De aard van de problemen rond de criminaliteitsbestrijding op de Nederlandse Antillen.

An advisory report describing the nature of problems encountered in the fight against crime in the Neth. Antilles.

Psychiatrist Roosenburg wrote the report on request of the respective island governments and the national government.

Andries van de Wal and Freek van Wel: Met eigen stem.

A literary history of the Neth. Antilles with anthology.

The writers adapted and rewrote material used by them over many years in a radio-programme of the Dutch Government's Information Service.

Published by 'Het Kabinet Voor Nederlands-Antilliaanse Zaken' Den Haag.

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Letters to the Editor

CAREFUL TO SPECIFY

In my opinion, a good informative magazine should be careful to specify. On any subject about which you speak, 'them, there, that' is not enough. For instance, on page 38 of Vol. 1, no. 1, where you speak of the local research team which has been investigating Socio-Cultural affairs since January 1980, it is important to tell the names of the persons concerned. If these persons do not wish to be named, they should have never joined the Team. The people residing in Curaçao would surely be interested in knowing Who is investigating and What is being decided for their Socio-Cultural future.

Martha Isena
Curaçao.

AR apologises for its negligence. The members of the mentioned research-team are:

miss L. Kelly
mr. R. Sint Jago
mr. R. A. Römer.
mr. F. Cellaire



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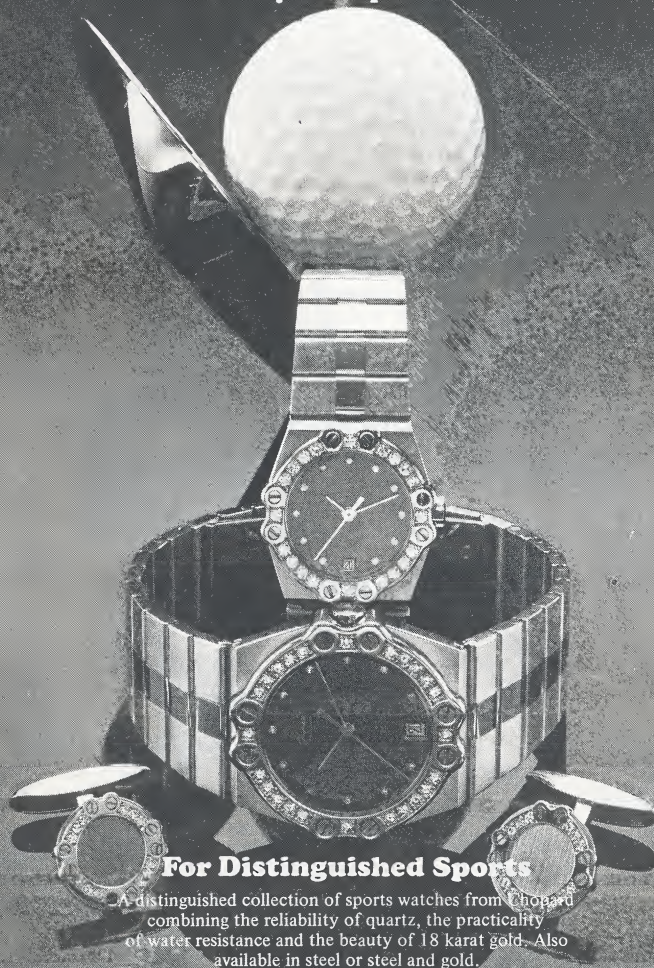

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